

IN THESE TIMES

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The revival of the student left

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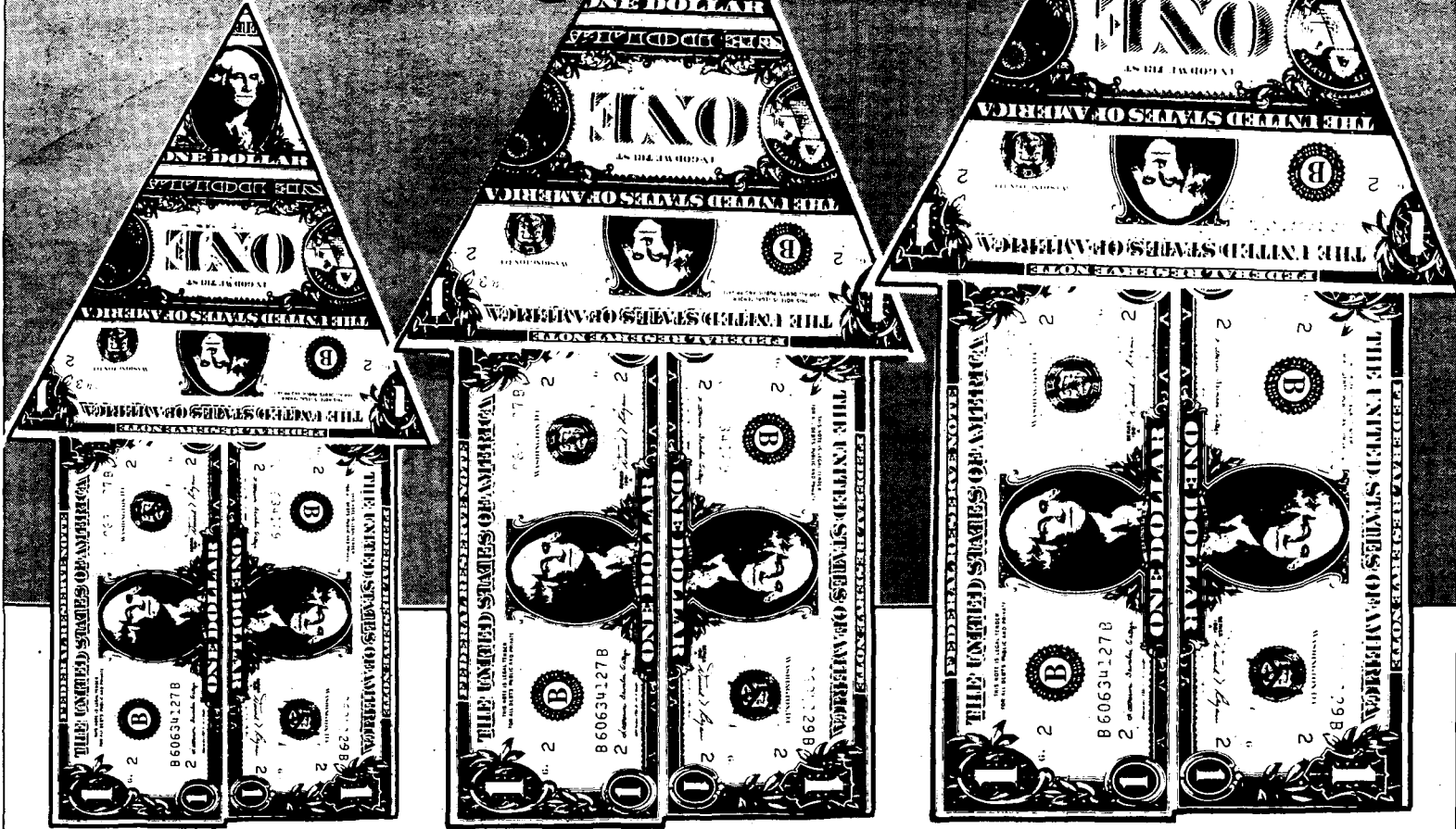
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New anti-rent control bill is a rite of spring



In These Times Graphic

By Joan Walsh

SACRAMENTO

For California rent control advocates, it's becoming a rite of spring: the annual fight against state legislation pre-empting local rent control ordinances. This year's model, AB 483, looks a little different from past bills, but the cast of characters behind it are the same.

Sponsored by Assemblyman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) and the California Association of Realtors, California Apartment Association and other large real estate and development lobbies, AB 483 contains what was left of last year's anti-rent control bill, also carried by Costa, after the many compromises and amendments forced by tenant lobbyists during the battle that led to its ultimate defeat. The bill would remove all single-family housing from the purview of rent control laws, exempt new construction and prohibit rent ceilings on vacant apartments—the last provision designed to thwart the tough laws imposed by the cities of Berkeley and Santa Monica.

Costa's strategy this year appears to be to present the bill as a compromise, one that respects "reasonable" rent control ordinances but outlaws "radical" measures like those advanced by left city governments in Berkeley and Santa Monica. "This bill does not seek to abolish rent control, but to establish stability," Costa told an Assembly committee May 6. But as originally written the bill's single-family housing section could have exempted every unit in the state from rent control. Any unit that, if owner-occupied, would be eligible for a homeowner's tax exemption was included and that covered all the state's housing stock, since property owners can choose to live in any house or apartment they own. Criticism forced Costa to amend the bill, but its new language is still vague—and many say deliberately so.

But if the bill's murkiness once seemed its genius, it could be its undoing. There might have been little sympathy in the legislature for defending the strong rent control measures imposed in Berkeley and Santa Monica, cities where extremism in defense of tenants' rights is thought to be no vice. But questions about the bill's impacts have managed to unite other rent-controlled cities against it, and even attracted opposition from cities and counties where rent control is not a concern, but local autonomy is.

"We've managed to shift the perception of the bill from being an attack on stiff rent control to an attack on all rent control," notes Mitchell Omerberg of San Francisco's Affordable Housing Alliance. Omerberg also works for Californians to Save Local Control, the pro-rent control coalition that is spearheading the opposition to AB 483. Chief among the rent control advocates are the California Housing Action and Information Network, the Campaign for Economic Democracy, San Francisco's Old St. Mary's Housing Committee and lobbyists for the rent boards of Berkeley and Santa Monica.

The rent control lobby has had a few more legislative successes than last year, mostly in delaying the bill's committee hearing. Housing Committee chair Gray Davis (D-Los Angeles) held it up until May, giving the opposition time to organize. Davis, formerly Gov. Jerry Brown's chief of staff, has evolved on the rent control issue. He supported a "liberal" compromise version of a 1983 anti-rent control bill, but has emerged as a leader against the Costa bill. One factor is the recent incorporation of the city of West Hollywood in his district, which was billed nationally as an attempt to establish a gay metropolis, but was actually fueled by demands for tougher rent controls than those afforded by Los Angeles.

Roberti and Brown.

Despite efforts by Davis and Assemblyman Tom Bates (D-Oakland/Berkeley), the bill got out of committee, six-to-three, a slightly better

margin than last year's eight-to-one vote. Now the best-case scenario for defeating it looks remarkably like last year's script—watch the bill sail through the Assembly, to be killed by Senate President Pro Tem David Roberti's (D-L.A.) Judiciary Committee. But opponents are trying to keep the margin of passage in the Assembly as small as possible. "If there's substantial momentum behind the bill, it will damage the [Judiciary Committee's] ability to block it," said Lenny Goldberg, a former Bates aide now lobbying for Berkeley's rent board.

In their efforts to mount a respectable Assembly showing, rent control lobbyists have worked hard to gain the support of powerful Assembly speaker Willie Brown Jr (D-San Francisco), with little success. Brown's maneuvers illustrate the tensions within the state Democratic Party, which rent control battles always crystallize. The speaker likes to be seen as a crusading liberal for civil rights and social

THE STORY INSIDE

programs, but in his spare time he's an attorney for some of the state's biggest corporate and real estate interests, many of whom also bankroll his Assembly campaign PAC. That PAC's contributions to Democratic Assembly incumbents and challengers have been known to insure party discipline when the speaker's moral and political suasion won't work.

While Brown voted against Costa last year, rent control advocates were angry that he didn't work publicly to defeat it. But this year they haven't yet been able to get him on record opposing the bill. "It's probably not in his power to kill the bill," Goldberg says. "But other politicians have said they'd go after as many votes as they could. The question is whether Willie is going to go after some votes for us." By contrast, Senate President Roberti's rent control support has proved as solid as Brown's is ephemeral. He has repeatedly steered the bill to the Judiciary Committee, made up of fairly liberal legislators whose districts include some rent-controlled areas. But the real estate lobby behind the bill knows the committee is its historical bottleneck, and has been subjecting political swing votes to heavy lobbying. "I wouldn't write off any votes," Goldberg said.

For all their claims to have made peace with most rent control laws, the forces behind the Costa bill are still an ideologically motivated bunch, and sometimes they can't contain themselves. Costa dropped his mask interrogating the bill's opponents in committee. "I would like to see if you agree with the following statements," he told a Berkeley witness, and proceeded to read from a document explaining rent control as a way to drive down land values, a form of property expropriation. Costa was quoting from *The City's Wealth*, a 1975 book outlining a left-wing master plan for city government. It was co-authored by Berkeley lobbyist Goldberg and was for years trotted out by Berkeley rightists as the Berkeley Citizen Action's slate's blueprint for socialism.

Chastened by criticism, Costa dropped that line of questioning and returned to his reasonable persona. But, as he told his audience in explaining why he reintroduced legislation that perished last spring: "This is an issue, frankly, that will not go away."

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GOUR

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By Diana Johnstone

WHEN TWO STATESMEN from countries that used to be enemies stand hand in hand in cemeteries where soldiers lie buried from past slaughters, chances are it is to close a deal preparing for more of the same.

The ceremony that West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl found so touching last year, when he and French President Francois Mitterrand stood hand in hand in the vast graveyard at Verdun, fit in with French efforts to promote Franco-German military integration through the West European Union. That was the consolation prize Mitterrand offered Kohl for having been left out of D-Day commemorations. Kohl liked it so much he wanted to do the same with Ronald Reagan.

But Bitburg is not Verdun. With its SS officers' graves, the Bitburg German military cemetery is charged with far more sinister symbolism, not only for what it recalls about the past, but also for what it suggests about the future. In studying the ambiguity of Reagan's gesture, American attention was focused on the past, on the variable proportions of remembering, forgiving and forgetting.

But in Europe, Bitburg will inevitably be read as a sign of where American policy is leading in the future. The most dangerous potential interpretation of Bitburg is that it symbolizes the switch of alliances dreamed of by some Nazis (including some top SS officers) toward the end of World War II: the dream that the Anglo Saxon powers, the U.S. and Britain, would rally to the side of Nazi Germany in a crusade to save "Western civilization" from Bolshevism.

The most adamant champion of the Bitburg ceremony was Christian Democratic floor leader Alfred Dregger, leading spokesman of his party's right wing, who reportedly put heavy pressure on Kohl to drag Reagan to Bitburg. In his letter to U.S. senators, Dregger wrote that he could only feel their objections to Reagan's "noble gesture" as an affront to his fallen comrades and to his brother, "a decent young man," who was killed on the eastern front. Dregger himself spent the last days of the war "defending the town of Marklissa in Silesia against the attacks of the Red Army." Quite sincerely, no doubt, Dregger presents his war as a patriotic defense of his homeland against Red Army "attacks," as if the Russian armies had not been brought into Central Europe by Hitler's surprise attack on the USSR.

Social Democratic Party (SPD) Secretary Peter Glotz sharply criticized Dregger's letter. Glotz called the idea underlying Dregger's letter, namely that Americans should forget the past because West Germany is an ally that supports the Reagan administration's arms buildup, "morally corrupt." Glotz spotted what Dregger was driving at with his "mute reproach to the Americans for fighting with the Soviet Union against Hitler and not with Hitler against the Soviet Union."

While the German left—Social Democrats and Greens—was united in its opposition to the Bitburg visit, the German right was divided. Bavarian leader Franz Josef Strauss called the operation "clumsy" and proposed the monument to the unknown soldier in Munich as a more suitable pilgrimage site than Bitburg with its SS tombstones. A more subtle and intelligent politician than Dregger, Strauss has, moreover, always gone out of his way to maintain good relations with Israel. Dregger, on the other hand, expresses the simple-minded good conscience of that part of the German right (including SS veterans and expellees from formerly German Silesia, now part of Poland) who consider that Nazi Germany was embarked on a great crusade to save European civilization.

In the Dregger-style rationalization, this heroic cause was lost due largely to Hitler and his immediate henchmen who committed excesses (against the Jews) and ran a



West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President Reagan: hand in hand at Bitburg cemetery

BITBURG

Reagan's semi-pardon of German Nazism

"totalitarian" state, meaning that only a small number of leaders were responsible, whereas the mass of idealistic "decent" Germans (like the Dregger brothers) were innocent. German conservatives wanted to see Reagan endorse this version of history by going to Bitburg.

In the midst of the uproar over Bitburg, the U.S. Embassy in Vienna announced on April 26 that it had withdrawn from two military ceremonies scheduled with the Russians to commemorate the end of World War II and Austrian independence. No reason was given. Earlier, the U.S. refused to take part in ceremonies marking the 40th anniversary of the historic meeting of American and Russian troops on the Elbe River.

Semi-pardon.

In a May editorial in the Paris daily *Liberation*, Gerard Dupuy wrote that Reagan's gesture "is bound to have a political meaning. The only one that can be drawn from his obstinate pilgrimage to Bitburg is not what press spokesmen kept repeating: a simple gesture of reconciliation with the toughest enemy, since transformed into the best ally. Much more, what must be seen is Reagan's desire to grant a semi-pardon to Nazism, insofar as it fought valiantly on the eastern front against the Evil Empire...."

During the war, the SS recruited more and more foreigners, notably anti-Soviet Balts and Ukrainians, who were reputedly especially brutal in the stepped-up massacres of the last desperate months of the Third Reich. Judging by the names, some of those Ukrainian SS are buried in Bitburg. The luckier ones were saved by U.S. Army intelligence and some even got to the U.S., where for 40 years, as experts on "Communism," they have continued to work in their modest way for the switch of alliance dreamed of by the Nazis.

Henri de Bresson wrote in *Le Monde* that when it comes to evaluating the meaning of Germany's defeat in May 1945, Germans are ideologically divided between "those for whom the only thing that counts is that the eastern part of Germany fell into the clutches of the USSR, and those for whom the essential factor remains the fall of Nazism." This is the difference, for in-

stance, between Dregger and Glotz. The point is that in the pursuit of Star Wars and the worldwide crusade against the Evil Empire, the Reagan administration finds its political allies in Germany among the former, not the latter.

Indeed, another significant aspect of the Bitburg incident is the way American officials totally ignored, and the American media almost totally ignored, the very existence of a German resistance to Nazism in the '30s and its spiritual heirs in the German left of today. After Hitler came to power, more than half the 300,000 members of the German Communist Party were arrested. Aside from countless illegal massacres and deportations, the regular courts alone condemned 225,000 Germans to prison for political reasons in Nazi Germany between 1933-39. German political resistance to Nazism has been ignored in the U.S., with the exception of a couple of its most respectable (and relatively late) manifestations, Christian or aristocratic. Indeed, the mass of "decent" Germans, like the Dregger brothers, went along with Nazism, as the mass of "decent, respectable" people everywhere will usually go along with those in command. But what of the minority "indecent" enough to think for themselves or follow their conscience?

War propaganda inextricably blended stereotypes of Nazis with stereotypes of Germans. The U.S. decided to consider Germany as "conquered" rather than "liberated." Germans, all Germans, were to be punished. Yet the policy of "de-Nazification" was never carried through. Soon Germans, all Germans, were instructed to get rich and join the Free World against "totalitarianism." In the first 20 years of Christian Democratic rule, the surviving indigenous political opposition to Nazism, represented primarily by the SPD, was allowed little scope in West Germany (except where encouraged by the British Labor government, overruled by the U.S. on major issues) and was almost invisible to Americans.

Ignoring the resistance.

The danger is that by considering all Germans as the same, the transition is eased from considering them all more or less

guilty to considering them all more or less innocent. This could have been avoided by a just recognition all along of the existence of a German resistance to Nazism, alongside the resistance movements in other European countries (which also, some more than others, produced eager collaborators with Hitler).

French observers suggest one good reason—in the cynical terms of political realism—for Reagan to have gone ahead with the controversial Bitburg ceremony: the furor it aroused gave him a bargaining advantage over Kohl, who got him into the mess. Kohl was obliged to show his gratitude by dropping any hint of opposition to such pet presidential projects as Star Wars (see story page 7).

Since the American president himself thought that going to Bitburg was "the right thing to do," the outcry against the visit has been seen as unfair by the great number of politically unsophisticated Germans whose sentiments on the matter apparently more or less coincide with Kohl's. A confusion has been created between a military cemetery and recognition of the fact that Germans, too—civilians such as the women and children refugees crowded into Dresden when it was fire-bombed by the British—suffered as victims of Hitler's war. The feeling of being unjustly treated "by the Jewish-controlled mass media and entertainment industry" in the U.S., as suggested by the mass weekly *Quick* and the conservative *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, will be exploited by those who insist that Nazi crimes against the Jews have been exaggerated, and that anti-Semitism was justified by implacable Jewish hostility to the German nation. According to the Nazi argument, only the Jews prevented the Anglo-Saxons from joining the crusade against Bolshevism.

On April 25 the conservative majority in the Bundestag succeeded in amending the so-called "Auschwitz Lie" law, introduced to allow automatic prosecution of anyone denying Nazi genocide of the Jews, in such a way as to make no mention of Jews. Instead, the law vaguely makes it an offense to deny persecution of any "group making up part of the nation" by "National Socialism or another tyranny." In effect, this means equating Nazi genocide of the Jews with Soviet expulsion of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe at the end of World War II. Anyone who contradicts what the expellees say about Soviet atrocities may be subject to prosecution under the new "Auschwitz" law. This favors a dynamic of nationalist German claims to Silesia. This is the one issue on the horizon best suited to provide the *casus belli* for the third war of the century in Europe—the last one, the one that would destroy the continent. ■

INSHORT

Beth Maschinot

Under fire in Greensboro

Top officers from the Greensboro, N.C., police department are sweating out the early days of May, and they have more than the already hot and humid weather to blame. As the civil suit against 38 officers of the police department for their failure to protect anti-Klan demonstrators went into its sixth week, the former police chief said that he knew before the march that "hundreds" of Klansmen and Nazis from across the state were planning to descend on the march to "harass" and "heckle" the demonstrators. William Swing, now retired, also said he thought that the heckling and harassment by the Klan may lead to "fist fights and stick fighting."

In a police department briefing three days before the march, other pertinent bits of information were passed on to Swing by his subordinates: a Klan leader (described by police intelligence as "a small person with a short fuse and a hot head") had met with Nazi leaders about coming to the march and Klan members had a .50 caliber machine gun and were coming to "shoot up the place." Swing also knew that the Klan had gotten a copy of the parade route when the police informant, Ed Dawson, had asked a police captain for it. The captain was aware that Dawson was also a Klan member and had a history of racial violence, but he gave the document to him, saying that it was "public record."

Several officers defended their "low profile" at the march—officers were not called in until after shots were fired—as a strategy for averting confrontation between the police and anti-Klan marchers. Many officers cited the animus between the police department and one of the marchers, Nelson Johnson, and said they were afraid that the "agitator" Johnson might turn the crowd against them. But Swing admitted under cross examination that he didn't know of any incidents where Johnson provoked violence against the police.

The lawyers for the plaintiffs in the \$48 million suit, people injured in the shootings and the families of those killed, are expected to rest their case this week. The plaintiffs have to prove that the police showed deliberate indifference to the demonstrators' safety. The defense is expected to take a month to argue their case.

What's news—

After 102 years of business, the *Wall Street Journal* still can't find qualified women and minorities to fill its upper echelons, according to a complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Labor by the Independent Association of Publishers Employees (IAPE), a *WSJ* union representing 2,000 employees throughout North America. IAPE claims that *WSJ* should institute an affirmative action plan—with hiring goals and timetable—to correct the problem and, while they're at it, obey the law.

The *Journal* (and other Dow Jones publications) receives over \$50,000 annually from federal government agencies who advertise in the paper, so the union argues that the company qualifies as a federal government contractor, writes Susan Jaffe. As such, it is required by federal law to insure equal employment opportunities by following an affirmative action program. "Any company receiving thousands of dollars from the public trough must have an affirmative action plan," says veteran *Journal* copy editor and IAPE President Eric Frankland. "We have nothing like that. The company only pays lip service to affirmative action."

According to Frankland, minorities and women are underrepresented in high level positions and predominate in lower level and menial jobs. But exact numbers are hard to obtain since management will reveal only a nationwide count of minority workers instead of a city-by-city count. "All the blacks could be in Atlanta and none in Chicago, so they could be discriminating in Chicago," Frankland explains. Nevertheless, the problem is obvious to anyone who looks around the newsroom: "After 102 years, there is only one woman bureau chief," Frankland observes. The *Journal* maintains bureaus in nearly every major city and employs 6,500 workers.

Besides refusing to supply the union with detailed information about minority employment and terminations, management says that it doesn't have to file an affirmative action plan with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance, the federal agency that oversees companies doing business with the government. "A

company spokesman said Dow Jones isn't a contractor and therefore isn't covered by the order," according to a short report buried inside the *Journal* on April 23. The union's survey of ads from the Commerce Department, Housing and Urban Development and other agencies covering several months reveals an estimated bill close to \$50,000. "If the ads didn't cost \$50,000," says Frankland, "they're giving the paper away."

Corporate clean-up

'Tis the season for corporation annual meetings, and with labor increasingly trying to gain leverage with corporations away from the picket line, there have been numerous assaults on corporate executives and appeals to shareholders in the last few months.

When the Steelworkers and other unions struck Phelps Dodge in June 1983, the strike was broken and the union was decertified in a vote last November. But the union campaign continues against the Arizona-based copper mining and smelting company. In annual meetings of Manufacturers Hanover Corporation and of Phelps Dodge, the New York City Employees Retirement Fund cast its votes, along with a bloc of some of the remaining union holdings, against Phelps Dodge Chairman George Munroe's election to the bank board and for a plan to force clean-up of the corporation's smelter at Douglas, Ariz., the nation's largest industrial polluter.

The Carpenters issued their own annual report on Louisiana-Pacific, the big lumber firm that broke away from the industry pattern to demand wage concessions. The strike, which started in June 1983, has been buttressed by a boycott and other corporate attacks. The

union's annual report claimed that company income profit and productivity are down as a result of a growing number of firms refusing to carry Louisiana-Pacific products. The Carpenters have also challenged corporate expansion plans by questioning bids for government funding and raising environmental issues.

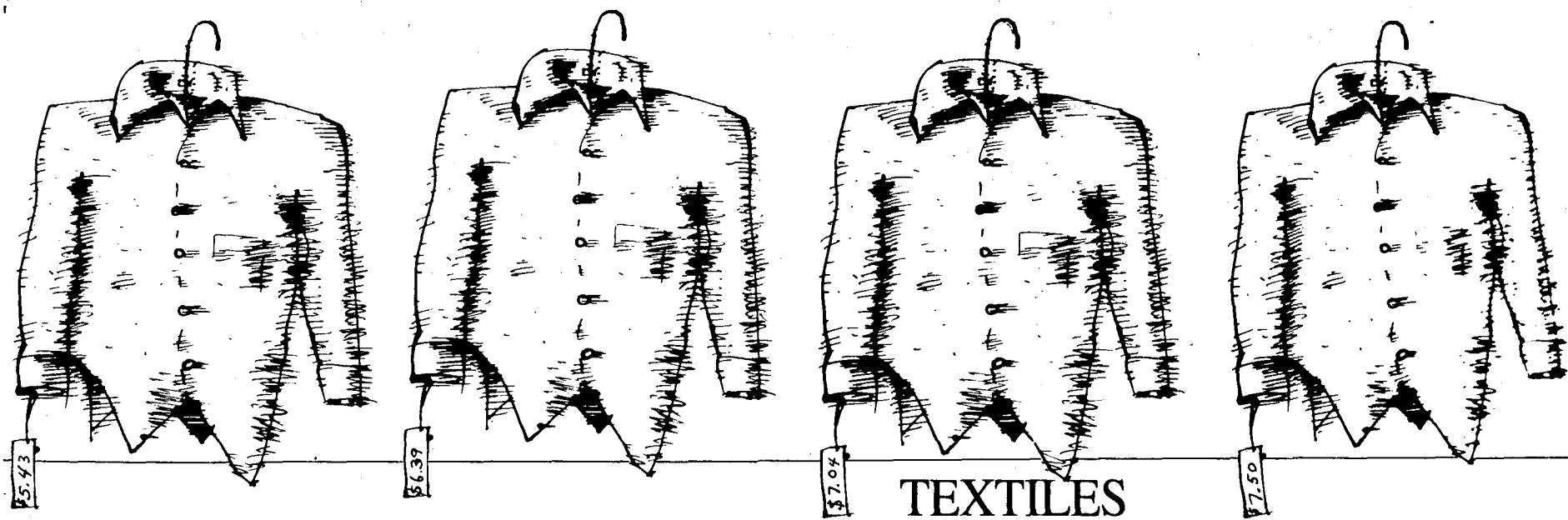
Semi-settled

A train collision in Motley, Minn., last June that left three Burlington Northern Railroad workers dead also left BN management squabbling for a scapegoat among the workers (see *In These Times*, March 20). Scramble no more, says the National Transportation and Safety Board. On April 30 the board pinned the blame on BN's inadequate training and supervising procedures. Railroad management still refuses to say if it will rehire Joe Ceasar, the dispatcher involved in the crash who was on his second day of unsupervised training after a two-week training period. The Brotherhood of Airline and Rail Clerk's (BRAC) Local 1310 President Cindi Burke has demanded that Ceasar be reinstated at BN at least as a clerk, a job that he held for 12 years before he was promoted to dispatcher. The NTSB also found no evidence that the workers involved in the crash—including the three who died—were "under the influence" of drugs and alcohol, as the railroad had earlier alleged.

The judgment, though welcome, isn't enough for BRAC. Says Burke, "If anything, the causes of the collision have deepened since Motley. We think there may well be more accidents" because of the escalating workloads that BN management continues to foist on the railroad workers.

This week's contributors: David Moberg, Jon Riskind





Industry-labor coalition fights imports

By David Moberg

FOR 13 YEARS BEVERLY REED HAD worked sewing women's clothes for R & M Kaufman Company in downstate Decatur, Ill., supporting three young daughters after her husband died.

Then in 1983 the factory closed. Shortly afterward, Reed suffered a heart attack. Her insurance ran out. Her utilities were shut off. "It was embarrassing to my friends and family," she said, with obvious pain. "I had worked so long, and I had to go and beg for help." Even with dislocated-worker training, she—like most of the middle-aged women who lost their livelihoods when the factory closed—could not find work.

"We knew it was because of imports," she said of the closing. Joel Kaufman, president of the 65-year-old firm, agreed. "The thing that has hurt is the tremendous glut of imports," he said. "Retailers we do business with have a tendency to import directly." One year they sold dresses to a major retail chain in Chicago; the next year the retailer had the same item made for it in East Asia. "They just take our best dresses and go overseas," Kaufman complained.

For decades, the textile industry—later joined by apparel manufacturers and the unions in both industries—have lamented the effects of imports. And since the '50s a web of controls over imports has grown. These quotas and tariffs have undoubtedly saved several hundred thousand jobs; but with each barrier, new competitive threats emerge: different fabrics, new exporting nations and a panoply of ingenious methods of circumventing rules (for example, attaching a bow to a shirt and labeling it a "set" to qualify for a lower tariff).

Countervailing political pressures to open U.S. markets come from big retailers and from client states overseas that the U.S. government wants to keep loyal. In their desperate scramble to earn hard currencies, every developing nation is tempted to enter the competitive fray, linking its low wages (as little as 16 cents an hour) with relatively inexpensive modern technology to provide devastating competition.

Increasing competition.

That competition has soared in the past few years, increasing the import share of the U.S. market by 25 percent in 1983 and then by an additional 32 percent last year. Imports took nearly half the clothing market in 1984 and 42 percent of the market for finished apparel and fabrics. Between 1979 and 1984, 234,000 textile and apparel jobs were lost. Many of those jobs were held by older women, minorities, immigrants and others living in small rural towns or in big city ghettos who had few employment alternatives when their job vanished.

As a result, the industry-labor coalition has rounded up 254 congressional representatives and 42 senators to co-sponsor legislation that would cut back and then seriously constrain growth of exports to 1 per-

cent annually from the biggest exporters—primarily Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and China (although Pakistan, Indonesia, India, the Philippines, Thailand, Brazil and Singapore would also be affected). Smaller exporters would be permitted a 6 percent annual increase, in theory the agreed overall limit in the last negotiations. Canada and European Economic Community countries would be exempt.

For all their varied self-interest, clothing makers, textile manufacturers and the unions—primarily the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers (ACTWU) and the International Ladies Garment Workers (ILGWU)—have formed an odd but effective alliance for roughly three decades to restrict imports.

Fighting imports provided a lowest common denominator, but there have been other plans. In the late '50s the Textile Workers proposed a permanent public textile development agency that would do research, administer a shorter work week and finance worker job shifts, retraining and retirement and set up a special board to administer federal labor law. But as Berkeley and Harvard professors Vinod K. Aggarwal and Stephan Haggard argue, management vigorously fought any government intervention in production decisions and feared that the agency and board would promote unionization.

The accommodation finally reached kept employment fairly stable, with a peak of 2.45 million in 1973 before the 1984 low of 1.96 million. But wages remained fairly low—an average of \$6.46 an hour in the textile industry in 1984 and \$5.53 in apparel, compared to an average of \$9.17 for all manufacturing. Despite that, in garment talks now underway, employers are pushing for a wage freeze and concessions.

The larger, more capital-intensive textile manufacturers have invested heavily in new machinery (almost all of it, incidentally, made in Europe and Japan), boosting productivity annually over the past decade by an average of 4.2 percent a year, more than double the manufacturing average. Much of the impetus for that investment, ironically, came from environmental and safety regulations: companies could comply most efficiently by modernizing.

Despite hefty apparel productivity gains, these smaller, fragmented companies have invested less. "There we have to automate," Goldman Sachs' Vice President for research Jay Meltzer argues. "But the drive to spend capital isn't there in the current environment. It's easier to go overseas than to pour money into iron and steel."

In recent years, ACTWU, the Commerce Department and some of the biggest textile manufacturers—most of them notoriously anti-union, like J.P. Stevens and Burlington—have joined in a Textile Clothing Technology Corporation to develop new automated sewing machines that can handle the limp material and work in three dimensions.

"It will wipe out 25 percent of the jobs

or more," acknowledges Arthur Gundersheim, assistant to the president and director of international trade affairs at ACTWU. "But better 70 percent of something than 100 percent of nothing. If we do nothing, we're dead. We've got no choice. There's no question it's [also] enormously deskilling. But we're participating so we can deal with its introduction in the factory and with the people who are displaced." But the apparel industry, whose small firms have little capital, will have "no incentive to invest if they know the market will be cut out from under them," he said.

Long-term prospects.

Nearly everyone recognizes that the long-term prospects for the industries are not cheery: per capita U.S. consumption has declined, total growth in the market has been under 1 percent annually, international competition will continue to intensify. But many—like Meltzer and Gundersheim—argue that with managed trade the more efficient producers can adapt, developing technology like the sewing robots, carving out market specialties, pioneering new marketing strategies.

For example, former ILGWU organizer Tom Young described two relatively successful, if embattled, firms. One family-owned bathrobe maker invested heavily in machinery and worker training and boosted productivity as well as quality. The women in another small union shop beat out non-union sweatshop competition by doing high-quality work and essentially running the shop themselves, including setting piece rates and prices.

Worker control could give more flexibility. Although many U.S. companies mistakenly thought lowered costs from long production runs would save them, as it did with jeans makers, Meltzer argued, "It's the flexible company that can adapt that will win."

Japanese firms have held their U.S. market because "they are willing to do short runs and give exclusive rights to patterns," Gundersheim said. Ironically, U.S. companies' heavy investment in technology discourages that.

Everyone agrees that import restraints have cost consumers. But how much? And is it worth it? Gary Hufbauer of the Institute

for International Economics put the cost at \$28 billion in 1984, for a cost of \$100 per person and a price of \$41,000 for each job saved. But George Wino, chief economist of the American Textile Manufacturers Association ridicules such figures as not including all the costs of unemployment and dislocation. Others argue that pricing assumptions made in such guesses are unrealistic.

Although the overall price level of clothing is undoubtedly lowered by imports somewhat, much of the advantage is captured by retailers. For example, four identical blue shirts at Sears came from the U.S., Taiwan, Guyana and Colombia. Cost to Sears ranged from \$5.43 to \$7.50 for the U.S.-made. The price on all: \$18. Increasingly, as Kaufman discovered, big retailers directly commission overseas producers, but prices frequently are set by U.S. "benchmarks." Hufbauer admits his price estimates are based on conjecture and adds, "Most of the difference of price of textile manufactured in Singapore or Los Angeles is taken up by middlemen. But as an economist, I don't regard middlemen with the same pejorative view as in popular literature."

Consumers might, as well might politicians who see that the alleged consumer advantage of imports is often a mirage. Meltzer adds, "Once we lose our domestic suppliers, if you think prices are over-inflated [now], wait until you see it then." In one notorious incident, shortly after the last U.S. velveteen manufacturer shut down, Japanese suppliers raised their prices by a third.

The strong dollar has boosted European imports, inverting the earlier advantage of lower wage rates and "decimated" exports, Wino said. (As recently as 1981 textile manufacturers had a slight trade surplus.) But with currencies pegged to the dollar, many Asian exporters have benefitted, labor and industry sources argue, from subterfuges and lax enforcement of existing agreements negotiated under the continually revised 1973 Multi-Fiber Agreement. The U.S. market is targeted: it's big, the dollar is needed and there has been some economic recovery.

There could be better industrial policies for textiles and apparel, but they would have to involve alternative employment for displaced workers as well as public intervention to spur industry development. If there is to be a garment industry in the U.S., which is itself essential for there being a textile industry, then some management of trade is essential. At current rates of import penetration without the proposed legislation, "it won't take long [for the industries] to disappear," Meltzer said, "and then its suppliers will disappear. This is the capitalist system at work, the profit motive at work. But somebody has to say, 'What does this do to this country? Not just where do these millions of people find work, but also what happens to the retailer and the consumer?'"

Imports took nearly half the clothing market in 1984. Since 1979, 234,000 industry jobs have been lost.

THE HOMELESS

The making of a new union

By Cecilio J. Morales Jr.

ACCORDING TO PENNSYLVANIA AFL-CIO President Julius Uehlein, they could make "the strongest union on earth." But in the 1850s, Karl Marx called them the "lumpenproletariat."

"They" are groups of the homeless and the unemployed. Ever since the recession of 1981-82, some 35 local advocacy and self-help organizations of mostly blue-collar and northeastern jobless have banded together into a National Unemployed Network (NUN). The group has centered its advocacy on state and federal level legislation affecting unemployment compensation, health care, mortgage foreclosure relief and plant closing proposals.

According to William "Chris" Sprowal, the leader of a Philadelphia group representing some 4,000 of an estimated 12,000 homeless in the city, the issue is how to move "beyond handouts and charity." Like the organizers of NUN, Sprowal and other members of the Philadelphia/Delaware Valley Union of the Homeless have only been able to sustain themselves against the Reagan administration's anti-poor policies.

So far, 4,368 union cards have been signed by homeless people in Philadelphia.

Nevertheless, the homeless union's leaders are now talking of going nationwide.

"[The union] will bring about a new day for the poor, for the homeless, for the unemployed, the under-employed and the uninsured—a day when we will organize to get what we need and stop waiting around for someone to hand it to us," said Sprowal.

After the founding of the new union on April 16, the group led a demonstration at a downtown Philadelphia shopping mall and formed picket lines to demand that businesses invest profits in projects for the poor. Uehlein and other labor leaders present compared the action to the organizing days of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in the '30s and the civil rights movement of the '60s. "Those picket lines that you form," said Larry Thomas, president of the Teamsters Local 500, "will not be crossed by our trucks."

The efforts of the homeless illustrate dramatically the Latin proverb that necessity is the mother of invention. In the late fall of 1983, Sprowal, 47, faced the prospect of a cold and lonely Christmas at a city-run shelter behind the Arch Street Methodist Church. Demoralized after a fruitless search for employment following his second divorce, Sprowal, the father of five children, had watched his life take the slippery slide from joblessness to destitution.

Sprowal had never been well off, yet he took pride first in working as a safety officer for Tenneco and later as a counselor for teenage runaways at Covenant 21, a shelter in Manhattan. For a time, he had also worked as a union organizer for a local of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees in New York City.

It was from the bottom of despair that

Sprowal, with other homeless people, approached the Methodist Church's pastor, the Rev. William Cherry, to ask his help in organizing a Christmas dinner for those staying at the shelter. "We were so down we felt it would be great if we could just get together for a meal with all the trimmings," Sprowal said.

Further association with Cherry and several sit-ins and marches eventually led to the founding of the first city shelter run by the homeless, in the basement of the Spring Garden Methodist Church. The arrangement resulted in the transformation of the facility into a Life Transition Center in January of this year.

Sprowal's Committee for Dignity and Fairness for the Homeless was spawned shortly after the Christmas dinner at Arch Street. It was composed of 10 core members interested in helping the homeless.

Committee members Cherry, Sprowal and M.T. Newsome, the pastor of the 89-member Spring Garden Church, agreed in early 1984 that the homeless would have the run of the basement in the evenings and vacate the facility during the day. Several months later, the committee gathered Cherry, city officials and Robert Gay, executive director of CORPP, a community-based group specializing in employment training, and agreed to launch job preparation for the city's homeless in the basement facility in the afternoons. A \$35,000 Job Training Partnership Act program was begun in January 1985 with the goal of placing 50 homeless people in jobs by the summer. CORPP was to train the volunteers, Cherry's church would keep the books for the committee and Spring Garden Church was to offer its site.

Gay said his involvement in running the program was a chance to learn as well as to teach. "I realized at that meeting that our stereotypes of the homeless are all wrong. They're not just the bag ladies cartmen and grate people, but rather multi-faceted group. When I first met Chris, I had no idea I was speaking to homeless person," he said.

Trouble started at Spring Garden some time before the job training program began but well after the homeless first got there. The congregation began to complain about the condition in which the homeless left the facility. According to Newsome, some people would not send their children to the church's summer program, and several prospective members who attended services once declined to return due to the presence of "street people."

Sprowal said he was grateful for the church's assistance, but unhappy at the way members looked upon the homeless. "They did not take on the shelter as part of their ministry," he said.

For his part, Cherry found himself in the uncomfortable position of mediator. "I've been involved with the homeless from the start, but I'm also sympathetic with the church. There have been frictions, but that's just because the program grew beyond everybody's expectations," he said.

By last Christmas those frictions had reached the breaking point and the congregation voted to ask the homeless to leave United Methodist Metro Ministries, the denomination's city-wide agency, was faced with evicting either the homeless or the congregation. In January the agency decided to "lease" the entire church building at no cost to the committee in recognition of the homeless' greater need. The Spring Garden congregation, which was viewed by Metro Ministries as declining, could use the facilities of the nearby Sanctuary Methodist Church and merge with the parish if it so chose.

While to Sprowal the decision was the realization of hopes, to Newsome it was the sad dashing of expectations that he could revive the parish. "One thing you have to say for the church, they've given of themselves in the end," Cherry said.

The battle would have been over for Sprowal's group, which was by then envisioning individual rooms for job trainees in the process of rebuilding their lives, had it not been for the Spring Garden Neighborhood Association. Spring Garden, a long-decaying inner-city area, has begun to attract young, upwardly mobile professionals who are restoring turn-of-the-century homes to their earlier glory. The neighborhood's new gentry viewed the homeless' expansion as a threat to realty values, as claimed in a zoning hearing in February that the transformation of the church building was in violation of zoning codes. The homeless group won the right to remain in Spring Garden, but not before appealing to Mayor Wilson Goode and other city forces, including Sprowal's former employers at the hospital workers union.

Sprowal, who several city officials called a "poor administrator"—a charge he readily accepts—turned the shelter over to committee member Leona Smith and has instead devoted his energies to organizing. In doing so, he was able to launch the first independent union for the homeless, the Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Union of the Homeless.

So far, according to spokesman David Fair, 4,368 union cards have been signed by homeless people in Philadelphia. The Union of the Homeless will require that unemployed members pay \$1 monthly dues, and those with a job, \$5. In addition, members must promise to register to vote, thereby becoming immediately active and gaining electoral leverage for the union with city officials.

According to Fair, the union is now seeking free health care for 50 members at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, city transportation discounts for the homeless similar to those granted senior citizens and business investment in poor neighborhoods.

Cecilio Morales is associate editor of the Washington Report on the Hemisphere.

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By Diana Johnstone

WEST GERMANY AND FRANCE have been under heavy U.S. pressure recently to agree to the "Star Wars" research program officially called the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) or else lose any say in its \$26 billion research bonanza. Both countries have squirmed in different ways. In Germany, a major political debate brought out arguments for and against. In France, government-owned television put on a propaganda show starring Yves Montand.

Pentagon chief Caspar Weinberger's March 26 letter to European governments giving them 60 days to reply to his invitation to share in SDI was widely resented in West Germany as an ultimatum. The Reagan administration obviously doesn't want to give its European allies too much time to think things over.

U.S. pressure is not exerted solely on the government level. Another form of pressure on European governments, especially Bonn, is that private companies are being tempted to deal directly with the Pentagon without paying any attention to their own governments. As a firm believer in free enterprise, could Chancellor Helmut Kohl object?

After some hesitation, Kohl officially approved the SDI in the course of an important debate in the Bundestag on April 18. He called the SDI "justified, politically necessary and in the security interests of the West as a whole." Yet at the same time he noted that the project involves "opportunities but also risks." He insisted on "fair partnership" with the U.S. and "guaranteed free exchange" of research findings.

But past experiences and the present attitude of the Reagan administration leaves Europeans scant hope of any "fair partnership." And far from exchanging research findings, the U.S. can be expected to share nothing, and moreover to use SDI's militarily sensitive nature to keep Europeans from exporting any civilian product of their own technologies involved in the program, especially to Eastern Europe.

Social Democratic Party (SPD) opposition to Star Wars was expressed in the Bundestag debate by Horst Ehmke, one of the party's most pro-American leaders. He noted that participation risks transforming European countries into appendages of the U.S. military-industrial complex. The SDI would not replace offensive with defensive weapons, as claimed, but would mean a dangerous new mix of offensive and defensive weapons, according to Ehmke. Research on technologies of the future could be carried on just as well outside a military framework, whether in European-American cooperation or in cooperation among Europeans.

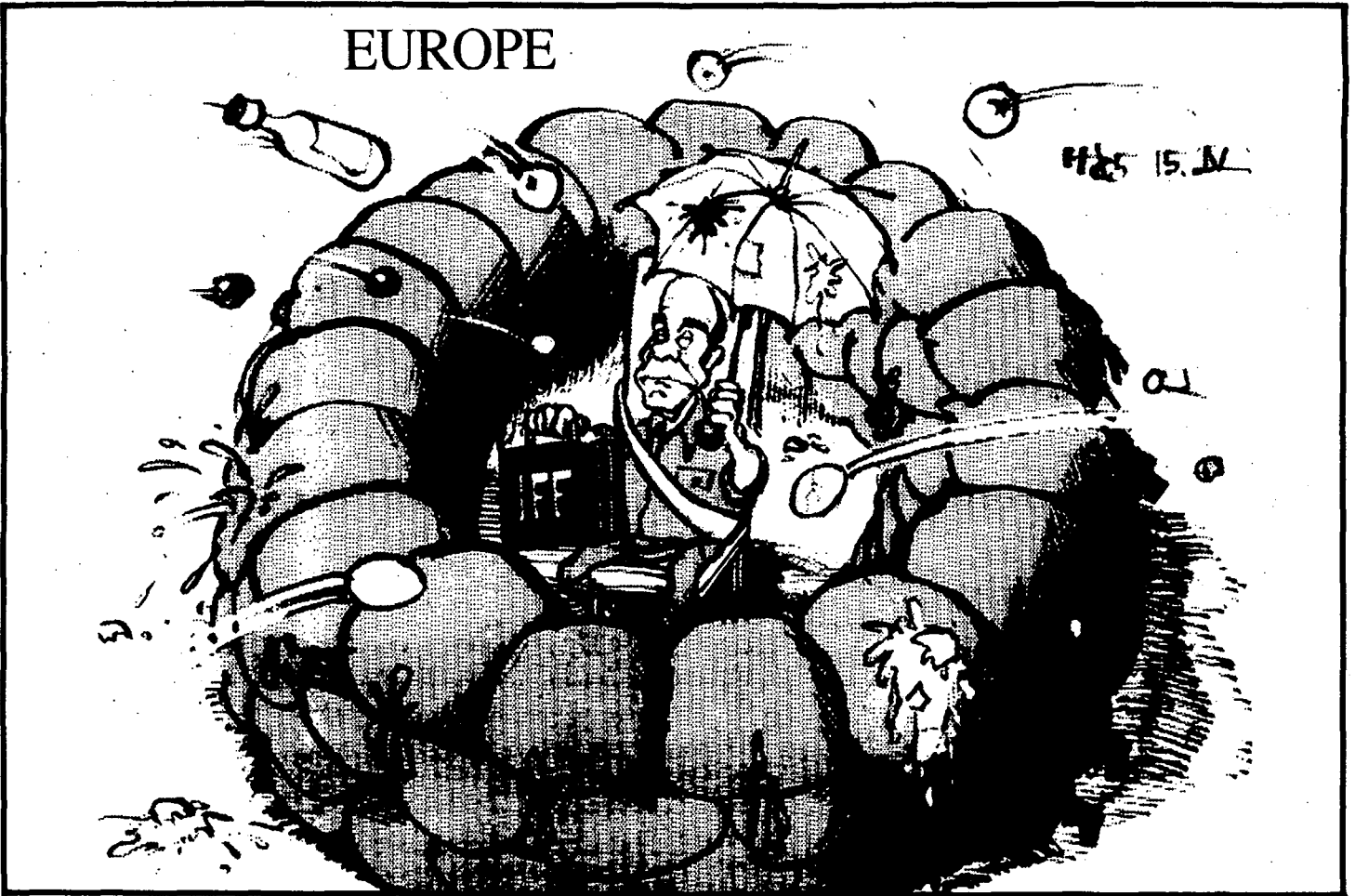
In his first speech after entering the Bundestag in the Greens' surprisingly smooth mid-term rotation, Torsten Lange demanded that West Germany follow the example of Norway, which has officially refused to take part in SDI. Lange said SDI signalled an end to the NATO strategy of "flexible response" and the switch to an offensive strategy.

Contrary to its name, Lange said, the Strategic Defense Initiative is not defensive and has not been thought up as an answer to Soviet activities. Rather, it corresponds to a U.S. intention to deprive the USSR of its second-strike capacity. Since success would give the U.S. leeway to consider a first strike with impunity, the USSR will respond by increasing rather than decreasing its nuclear arsenals, Lange said. This will have "devastating effects" on arms control.

Drumming up support.

Right-wing Christian Democrats tried to drum up SDI support by a mixture of anti-Communism and near-panic at missing out on technological advance. Alfred Dregger claimed the American effort would mean a fantastic technological surge that would revolutionize civilian production and the markets of the future. Dregger chided the SPD for opposing a "defensive" system. The SPD, he said, was entirely isolated in

EUROPE



West Germans debate Star Wars

Europe and could only "warm up to Moscow and the Greens."

Christian Democratic Union General Secretary and Family Affairs Minister Heiner Geissler complained that his party had lost leadership of public opinion on the issue of the SDI to Social Democrats like Willy Brandt and Oskar Lafontaine. Geissler insisted on the need for a "change of defense policy climate," which in his view means putting the technological and even the military aspects below the "matter of principle": opposition to Soviet Communism. The German people must have it drummed into their heads "that the Soviet Union, the Soviet regime are the real disgrace of our time and of this civilization," Geissler said.

Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher of the Free Democratic Party (FDP) let his strong doubts show through his support for Kohl's position. Genscher warned against hasty decisions that would end free reflection on ways to prevent war and create strategic stability, and put Europe on the sidelines of policy formulation.

FDP spokesman Helmut Schäfer stressed that Germany should not go it alone and that "in no case" should there be a "solely bilateral cooperation" between Washington and Bonn.

But the French daily *Le Monde* commented that in reality, the cooperation proposed by Weinberger "is conceived as bilateral, not only between the Pentagon and such-and-such a government, but also with such-and-such a European firm or laboratory whose work could interest SDI.... In other words, the U.S. partners are considered in this affair as sub-contractors, with all the risks of fragmentation, unilateral orientation, even brain drain, that this implies." Meanwhile, *Le Monde* reported, NASA has addressed itself directly to about 70 industrial or banking groups within the European Community.

A West German expert study group from industry and defense-related research concluded that about 30 big German companies have good prospects for SDI participation, the German magazine *Der Spiegel* reported. If the U.S. wants the best in the world, it will have to turn to Zeiss and Leitz for optical sensors and to Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm for "subsystems," and Germany is also tops in several other sectors, the German study group found. The experts acknowledged that the Americans will take what they want for their program and give nothing in return. Nevertheless, they concluded their report in favor of cooperation.

The German Bundestag debate was enlivened by an uproar over Defense Minister-

Manfred Wörner's recent mishaps in Washington. He failed to get Weinberger to allow NATO in Europe to adopt an aircraft "Identification Friend/Foe" (IFF) system developed at a cost of 127 million marks by the big German corporation Siemens. Wörner was widely considered the fool in the April Fool's Day agreement signed in Washington between the two defense chiefs. Although described by Wörner as a "compromise," the agreement abandoned the Siemens system in favor of a hypothetical improved version of the existing American system, judged unsafe by the Germans. German industry was promised some vague "compensation"—perhaps an order for tracks for American tanks.

Weinberger's veto of a German system for use in German airspace was a near perfect illustration of what rankles even the most pro-NATO Europeans about American "leadership." In effect, Weinberger gave American imperial convenience priority over European air safety.

Some important background: German experts had concluded that the American "Mark" IFF currently used as the NATO Identification System (NIS) jeopardized flight safety in West Germany because it operates on the D-band also used by civilian aircraft. The German postal service thus rejected authorization for the American system. Siemens developed a much better system operating on the E/F band reserved by the post office for military aircraft. Aside from the danger to civilian air traffic, exercises had shown that with the existing American system, in the opening days of a conflict NATO would shoot down over 20 percent of its own aircraft.

Nevertheless, Weinberger overruled the Germans with the argument that the U.S. had to think in global terms, and a worldwide conversion to the E/F band would be too much trouble.

Social Democrats reproached Wörner for dealing "like a beginner" and a "dilettante" with the Americans, and his days at the defense ministry were generally thought to be numbered. The irony is that Wörner is likely to be replaced by someone much worse—that is, by a real right-winger like Dregger or Geissler or Strauss, someone who will advance the interests of the German arms industry by reviving anti-Soviet ideology and flattering the Reagan administration.

The SDI presents German industry with a dilemma. On the one hand, it can continue its role as machine shop of the world, exporting peaceful industrial equipment in all directions, including Eastern Europe, Germany's natural market that is still far from

West German Defense Minister Wörner's recent mishaps have put him under attack.

saturated. But the Reagan administration will continue to put in its path as many obstacles as it can.

Or German industry can go with the SDI and strengthen its military production. But this means losing trade prospects in Eastern Europe, for several reasons. The Americans will use the military nature of technological advances to impose export bans. And the Soviets, frightened by both the revival of the German military-industrial complex and the anti-Soviet propaganda campaign that will go with it, may restrict trade with the Federal Republic.

German industry is most likely to try to have its cake and eat it too: to build up its military production while at the same time trying to obtain a greater measure of independence from the Americans by developing cooperation with other European industries, which the Germans can reasonably expect to dominate. Thus Franz Josef Strauss, the conservative CSU political boss of Bavaria—which is a center of Germany's blossoming high-tech arms industry—favors the SDI but also calls for a "European Strategic Defense Initiative" (ESDI) on the pretext of protecting Western Europe from Soviet SS20 missiles.

In an interview in the German daily *Tageszeitung*, Dr. Hans-Peter Dürr of the Max Planck Institute for Physics and Astrophysics expressed surprise that SDI had made so much headway politically since scientifically it made no sense. Asked about the attitude of his American colleagues, Dürr said that in the U.S. he has not met anyone who considers Reagan's laser umbrella a realistic idea.

"They see it as fantasy, for most of them it is quite impossible," Dürr said. "But many are ready to take part. A lot of them say, if I can develop a new laser and get money for it, I can give jobs to my gifted students and do interesting research. So why not, especially if it's not going to have any consequences. So there are opportunistic reasons. What is fatal is that this sets a dynamic going."

In West Germany, this dynamic is especially dangerous. The German left, represented by both the SPD and the Greens, sees Reagan's SDI favoring the resurgence of a mighty military-industrial complex and a crusading anti-Communist ideology: the same essential factors that brought Hitler to power. The danger will be that much greater if it is true, as Dregger claimed, that the Social Democrats (and the Greens) are "isolated in Europe."

Next week: French propaganda

BACK ON THE FRONT LINE

By Dennis Bernstein & Connie Blitt

WHEN DOUG YOUNG FIRST arrived in 1981 at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., he enthusiastically entered Naval ROTC.

His father had served at Normandy during World War II, his brother flew F-8 Crusaders over Vietnam and his sister was one of the first female aviators to land a jet on a naval aircraft carrier. Even after he recognized the ROTC's world view contradicted his own values and left the program, Young remained a staunch Republican. In the first presidential election in which he was old enough to vote, he cast his ballot for incumbent Ronald Reagan.

We talked with the 22-year-old computer science major as he stood in a shantytown recently constructed by anti-apartheid protesters in the center of Cornell's lush campus. Young was encouraging fellow students to support university divestment.

When asked if he is still a Reagan supporter, he paused and answered, "You might say I'm in the process of becoming disenchanted. I see Reagan as a man who is not very well informed. He doesn't seem like exactly the same person I thought I was electing."

According to Doug Young and many other students like him, "Teflon Ron" is beginning to stick to himself. After last November's election, a "psychological threshold" was passed, said University of Colorado student Gonzalo Santos, as he reflected on the recent campus protests against U.S. intervention in Central America. With no relief in sight from budget cuts at home and war-like policies abroad, Santos suggested that students are becoming disenchanted—and are making their disenchantment public.

This spring a tidal wave of protests on campuses from Hawaii to Maine has left the myth of student apathy lying in its wake. Extensive groundwork by committed students over the years has provided a focus and clarity of purpose for this outpouring. Protesters appear well-informed, serious and determined to have an effect.

If a single political theme can be drawn from the current groundswell, it would seem to be a call for the right to self-determination. Students are challenging the contention by the U.S. government that national security interests give it the right to interfere with the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. And they are expressing outrage that, although a majority of American citizens favor a nuclear freeze, Reagan is bent on Star Wars.

But broadly speaking, apartheid has become the central issue for these college students. It is the clearest example of a people's right to self-determination being usurped by a brutal minority government that openly espouses racist principles and imprisons, exiles or murders its political opponents.

Students from several large universities, in conjunction with the American Committee on Africa, called for a National Divestment Day on April 4. The day included teach-ins, sit-ins, campus forums and demonstrations.

At Columbia University students chained shut the doors of "Mandela Hall"—formerly Hamilton Hall—and blockaded them for three weeks, while hunger strikers demanded and eventually won a meeting with their elusive university president, Michael Sovern (see *In These Times*, April 24). The militancy and commitment of Columbia protesters began a chain reaction of demonstrations at universities and colleges in almost every state.

Students are implementing a variety of actions and organizing tools, including everything from sit-ins and civil disobedience to rent strikes and direct mail campaigns. A computer network has been set up between the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Florida at Gainesville and more than a dozen other schools to keep protesters apprised of each other's actions and to disseminate up-to-date research and reports.

Thousands of students have already demonstrated the depth of their commitment by risking university expulsion and arrest. At Cornell University acts of civil disobedience have become so widespread that Ithaca District Attorney Anne S. Clavel requested that a special prosecutor be appointed. She did this because of a possible conflict of interest due to the fact that her husband and two children were among the more than 1,200 people arrested during recent anti-apartheid protests on campus.

The young organizers have been encouraged by the large outpouring of support from faculty, staff and local communities. In some schools, like Yale University, recent site of demonstrations against the CIA, militant union actions by campus employees have politicized students (see *In These Times*, Jan. 30). And the workers have not forgotten the students' support for their strikes and job actions. Columbia student leaders acknowledge that the substantial material support they are receiving from campus clerical and service workers—access to photocopy machines and use of a campus police walkie-talkie—added greatly to their ability to prolong their actions and have an impact on the community beyond the university.

At the University of Iowa, the New Wave Party, a student group originally formed to oppose Carter's call for registration, has joined with other student groups and community organizations to form the Iowa City Coalition Against Apartheid. In San Francisco, on national No Business As Usual Day, April 29, students and others went on a tour of local banks with corporate connections to South Africa. The organizers of the student blockade at Columbia, the Coalition for a Free South Africa, have now moved their actions off campus to the working offices of individual trustees. They recently attempted to block the entrances to the mid-town Manhattan offices of the prestigious brokerage firm of Paine Webber, whose first vice president is also a trustee at Columbia.

By calling for an unraveling of complex university investments, the students are testing the sacred cow of free market enterprise. They are indirectly telling corporate giants where they can do business and how they should do it. Though many are aware of the uphill nature of this battle, they are not discouraged.

Doris Taggart, president of the Black Students Alliance at conservative Georgia State University, said, "It's catching on slowly, but it's catching on with heart."

A coalition of students from the Atlanta University Center, a consortium of colleges in Atlanta, Ga., which has the largest concentration of black students in the world, recently organized a week-long campus boycott of Coca-Cola. The company, whose national headquarters is in Atlanta, was also the target of recent strikes for better working conditions by its black employees in South Africa. The huge bottling conglomerate—a symbol of American corporate prowess around the world—seems more interested in perfecting the taste of its famous soft drink than changing the negative effects of its corporate policies on South African blacks.

Michael Phillips, an organizer of the Coke boycott and editor of the Morris Brown College newspaper, said, "We lived under American apartheid just 20 years ago. In 1964 we gained, for all intents and purposes, the right to vote free of harassment. We cannot sit here today having achieved some semblance of political mobility and freedom and turn our back on our people over there. That would make us hypocrites."

Phillips believes that the soda machines should be removed from campus and no Coke products should be bought by the black community until Coca-Cola "gets its priorities together."

Although Coke has given substantial amounts to humanitarian causes in this country, such charity, like the \$500,000 recently pledged to the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta, seems to come with strings attached. Several prominent black politicians and civil rights leaders have not only refused to participate in the call for Coca-Cola to divest but have actively discouraged such actions. Mayor Andrew Young, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, has to date refused to publicly call for full divestiture.

Impact on legislation.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) is among those who refused to support recent demonstrations at Coca-Cola, according to the testimony of South African exile Tandi Gcabashe at a May 6 hearing before the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid. Gcabashe, who works for the American Friends Service Committee in Atlanta, is the daughter of the late president of the African National Congress (ANC) and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Zulu Chief Albert Luthuli. An important result of student protest, she said, has been the boost given legislation pending in local, state and federal governments. She was deeply moved by the passage of a referendum at Georgia State University this spring. "To have students push very hard for their own divestment bill is really going to put necessary pressure on the state legislature," she said.

Georgia State Rep. Tyrone Brooks agreed. "This is going to help us tremendously. We need to have the active element in the streets. We need to have the students on the picket line. And we need to have the boycotts because that is going to help me here in the state of Georgia as I work toward divestment. And it is also going to help those in Washington who are pushing for legislation in Congress."

Similarly, students from the University of Wisconsin recently let their legislators know how they feel about a divestment bill currently under consideration. On April 24 they began a two-week, round-the-clock occupation of the state capital building's rotunda. Up to 400 protestors a day held teach-ins, committee meetings and lobbying sessions with their representatives. They were able to point to the experience of the University of Wisconsin, which in 1978 divested all of its \$11 million in holdings in South African-related corporations and did not suffer financially.

But Wisconsin, Michigan State University and others who have divested are exceptions. Most universities' response to student demands for divestiture has been negative and predictable. Administrators and trustees with a vested interest in the South African economy are quick to quote the Sullivan Principles, a set of guidelines designed to give blacks who are employed by U.S. corporations in South Africa, equal pay and equal rights within the work place.

Cornell's Senior Vice President William

Herbster, formerly a high-ranking investment executive at CitiCorp, appears to believe that investing only in corporations that have implemented the Sullivan Code is a humanitarian act. He recently defended Cornell's \$110 million investment in South African-related corporations to a standing-room only divestment forum on campus. "I think that responsible organizations like this university and others, by the very fact that they are investing in these companies, can further encourage them to be responsible in South Africa."

Many others besides Herbster advocate this position despite declarations by the Federation of South African Trade Unions, the largest black union in the country with 120,000 members, to the effect that the Sullivan Principles only perpetuate the racist regime's power.

"We endorsed the Sullivan principles six years ago," said Sue Ray, a student representative with full voting power on the State University of New York (SUNY) Board of Trustees. "And we can see just by looking at what's happening in South Africa that they aren't doing anything. One percent of the labor force might be helped, but as soon as they walk out of the gates at 5:00 p.m. they're back in their second-class citizenship."

Al Davidoff, president of the UAW local representing workers at Cornell, is skeptical of administration officials who purport concern for workers in South Africa. "It's particularly hypocritical," he said, "because these administrators are the very people who have made no bones about their efforts to destroy our unions at their university." The Cornell UAW chapter voted overwhelmingly to support the students' actions for divestment.

The current protests are being felt in South Africa, according to African National Congress spokesman Neo Mnumana. "The point is not to make the slave more comfortable, but to liberate and bring the plantation down."

Overt actions against the CIA.

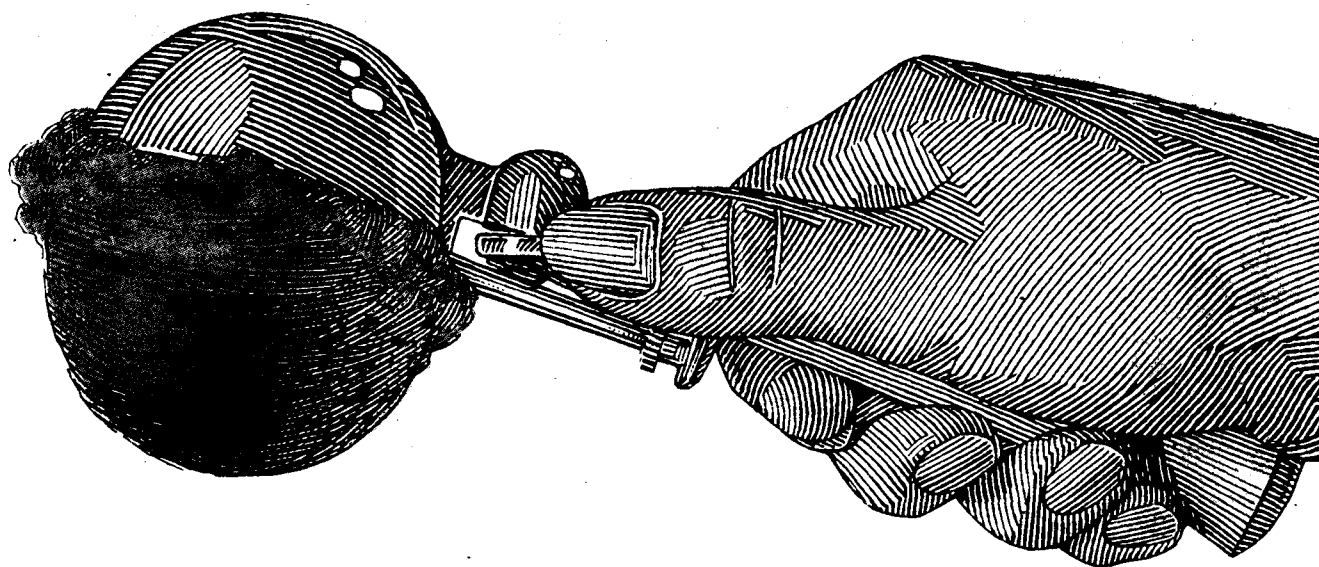
To date, the apartheid movement has captured the spotlight, but demonstrations against intervention in Nicaragua and CIA recruitment on campus are having an impact as well. After four years of its secret war against the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan people they represent, the CIA is no longer welcome on many college campuses. In fact, the agency is now forced to exercise nearly the same level of secrecy and cunning when entering a university campus that it does when it sneaks over the Nicaraguan border from Honduras or Costa Rica.

The CIA was granted a less than cordial welcome recently at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Upon discovering that the agency intended to hold recruiting sessions on campus, students, faculty and members of the local community met on short notice and planned a strategy to frustrate the agency.

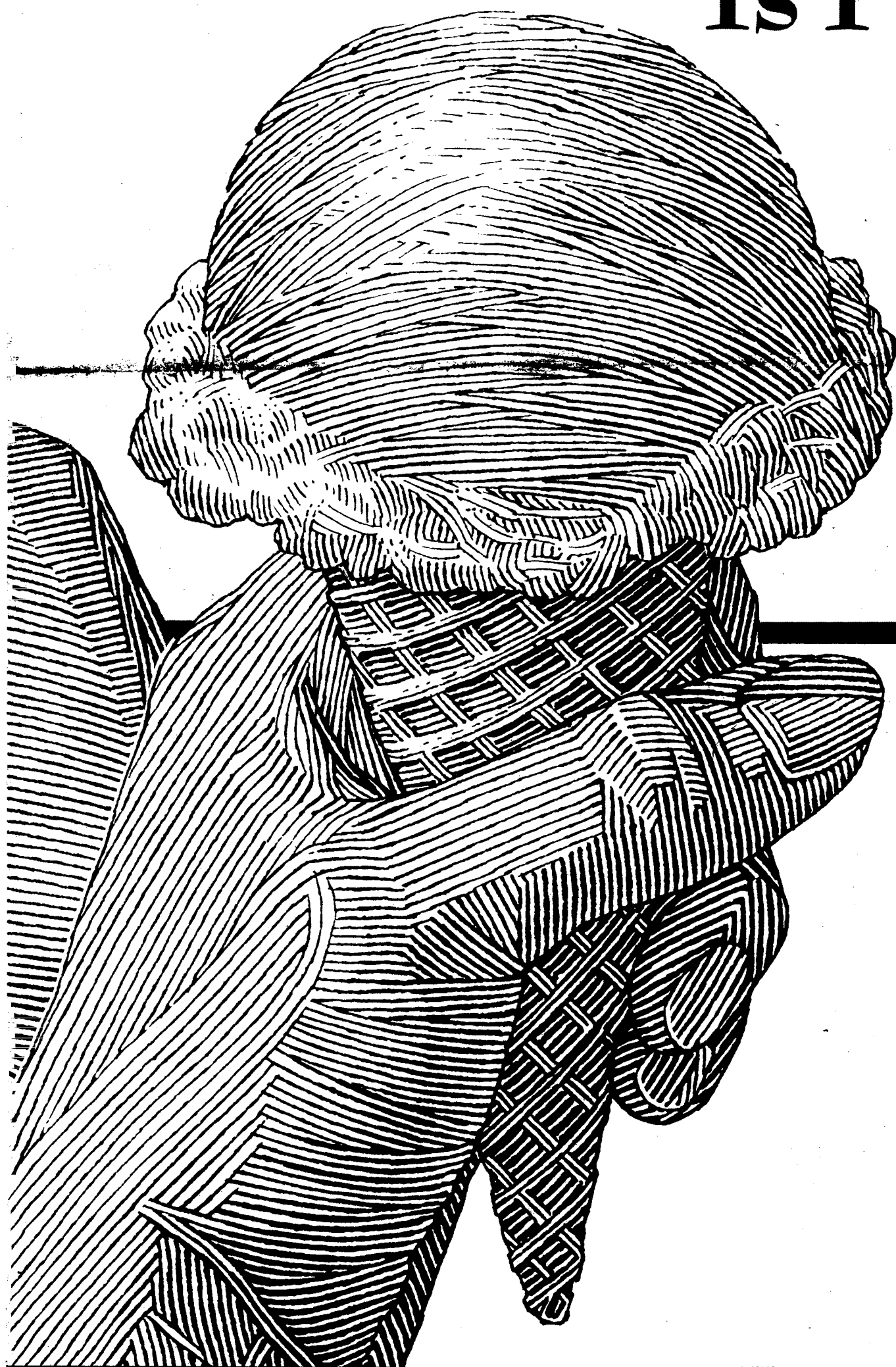
The ad hoc committee issued a proclamation accusing the CIA of assassination, rape, torture and attempting the overthrow of a foreign government. The group then approached the local district attorney and requested he indict the recruiters for aiding and abetting the CIA in the commission of crimes against the people of Central America. The D.A. declined to act.

By the time the CIA arrived on campus, 70 people were prepared either to perform a citizen's arrest on the CIA or be arrested in the process. Subsequently, a crowd gathered in front of the building where the CIA was conducting its registration drive. Three at a time, protesters approached a microphone and stated why they felt compelled to resist the CIA. Then they approached the police line and asked the officers to assist in the arrest of the CIA or "step aside and not obstruct justice."

Gonzalo Santos, math and science coordinator of the University's Learning Center and the Regional Director of CISPES, began the testimonies by saying, "There comes a time when silence is betrayal. The high crimes against humanity that are going on in Central America are conditioned upon business as usual within our borders. They



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BOOKS



THE DECLINE OF SOCIALISM IN AMERICA

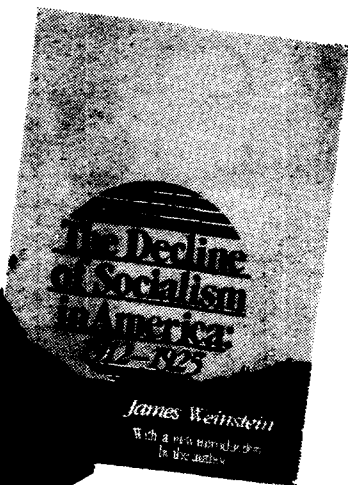
By *In These Times*
Editor James Weinstein
\$12.95

In this classic history of the decline of the Socialist Party in America (out of print since 1974), James Weinstein argues that the Party remained substantial until 1919, when factionalism arose to doom it. Splits occurred over opposition to World War I, the Wilson administration and, above all, over some Socialist expectations that the Russian Revolution would be followed by worldwide revolution.

THE CORPORATE IDEAL IN THE LIBERAL STATE 1900-1918

By James Weinstein
\$6.98

A historical unraveling of how the American corporate class gained the loyalty of the populace and made its own world view presentable as the general will during the Progressive Era. A well-researched critique of the roots of big business' ideological domination of American society.



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Europe's Role in America's World

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In this lively and polemical book, *In These Times*' Diana Johnstone argues that U.S. strategy is designed to exploit international rivalries within Europe, reasserting its own military and political dominance through rearmament and an aggressive anti-Communist crusade.

Johnstone provides a lucid portrait of a Europe still dominated and limited by past rivalries, unable to transcend the petty grandeur of its nation states even in the face of unprecedented threats to peace.



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SYLVIA ON SUNDAY

THAT WOMAN MUST BE ON DRUGS

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MY WEIGHT IS ALWAYS PERFECT FOR MY HEIGHT—WHICH VARIES

MERCY, IT'S THE REVOLUTION AND I'M IN MY BATHROBE

By Nicole Hollander
St. Martin's Press
\$5.98 each

In this series of the syndicated "Sylvia" comic strip, the flamboyant feminist keeps up the steady stream of razor-sharp wisecracks aimed at the absurdities and difficulties of surviving in a sexist, consumer culture. TV, sexism and the New Right all suffer deflation from her darts.



"That woman"

I bring home the bacon... fry it up in a pan... and never let you forget you're a man

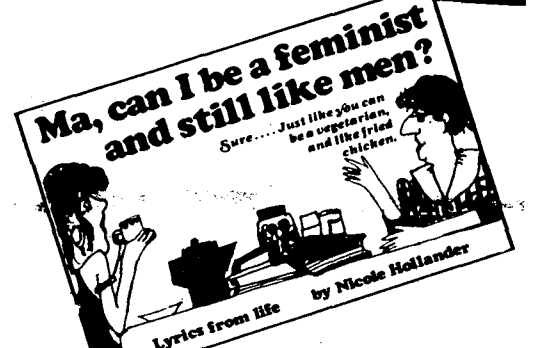


SYLVIA ON SUNDAY
BY NICOLE HOLLANDER

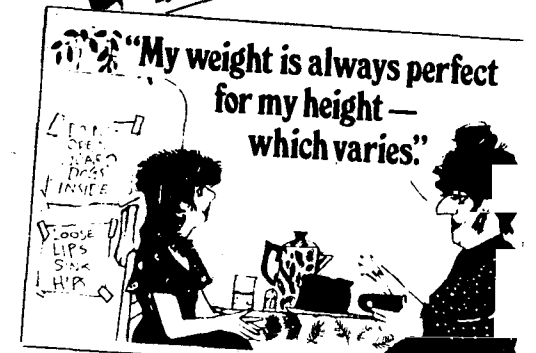
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Tall and Fat
by N.W.O.L.E.



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Lyrics from life by Nicole Hollander



"My weight is always perfect for my height—which varies."



"Mercy, it's the revolution and I'm in my bathrobe."
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More Sylvia by Nicole Hollander

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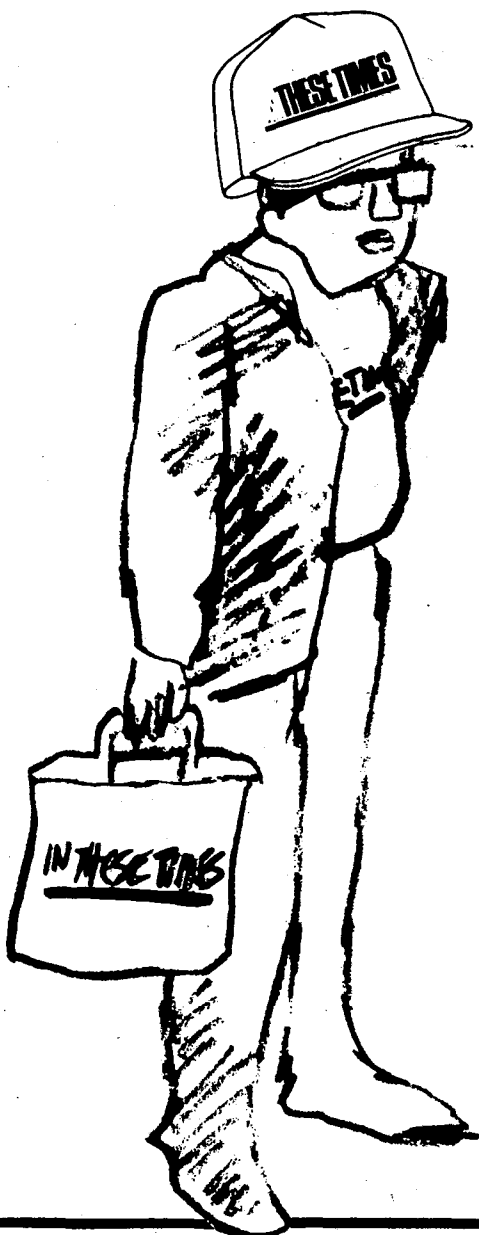
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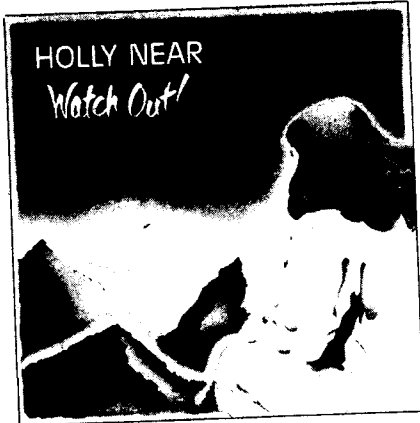
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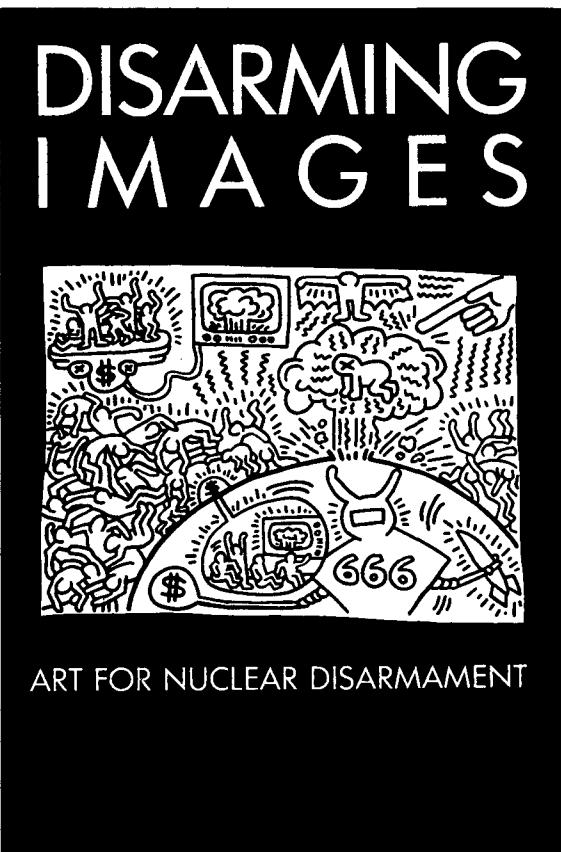
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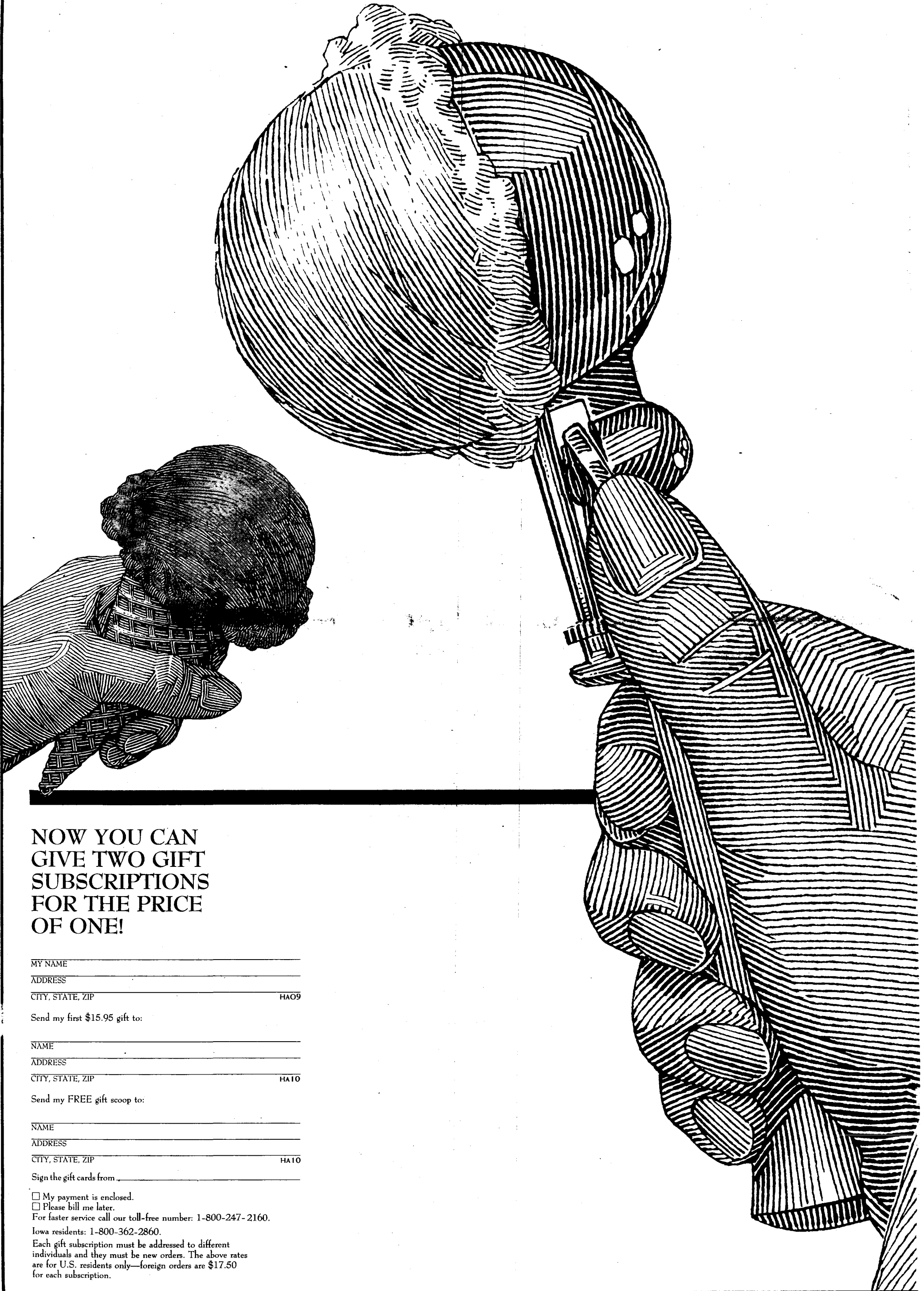
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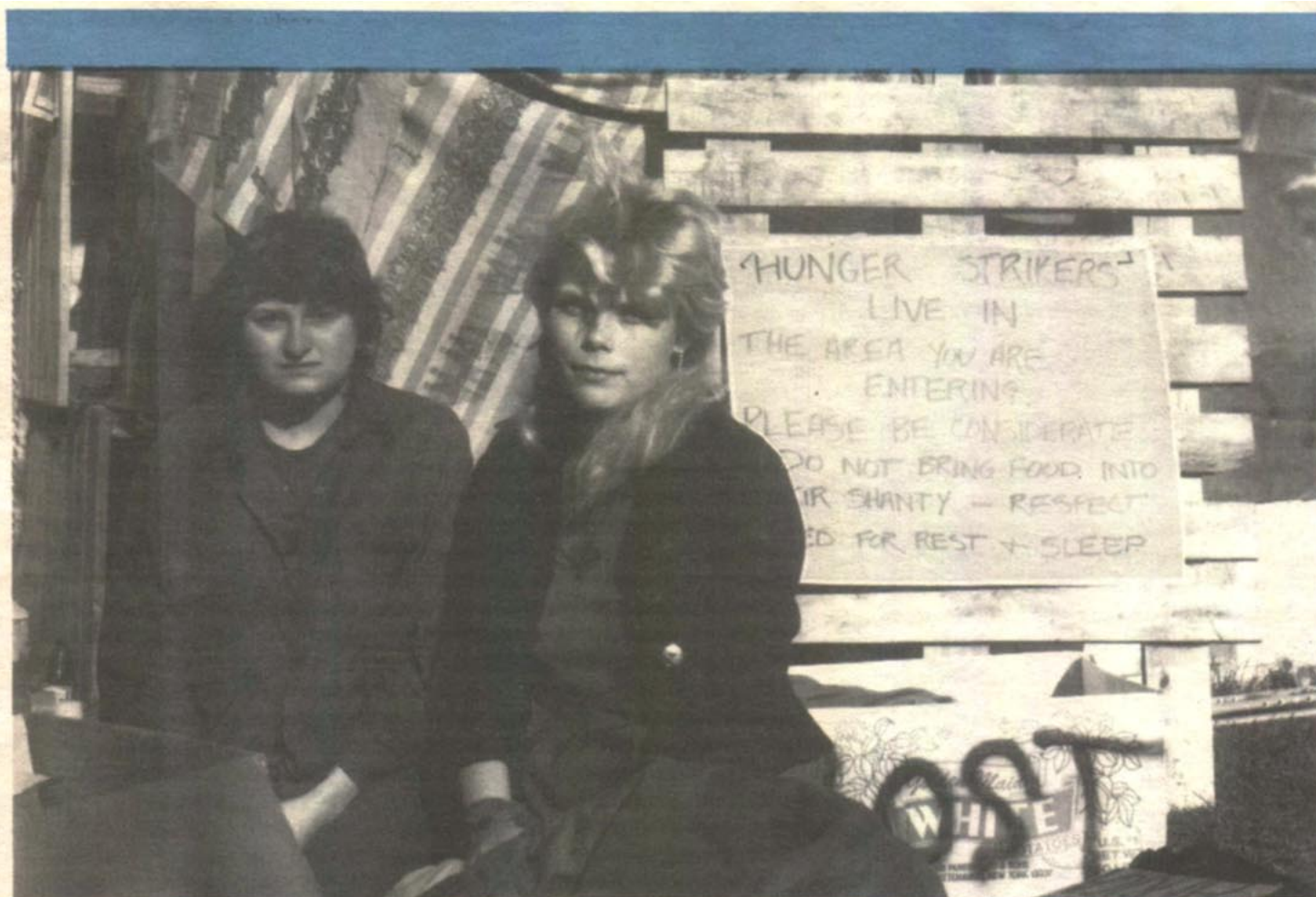
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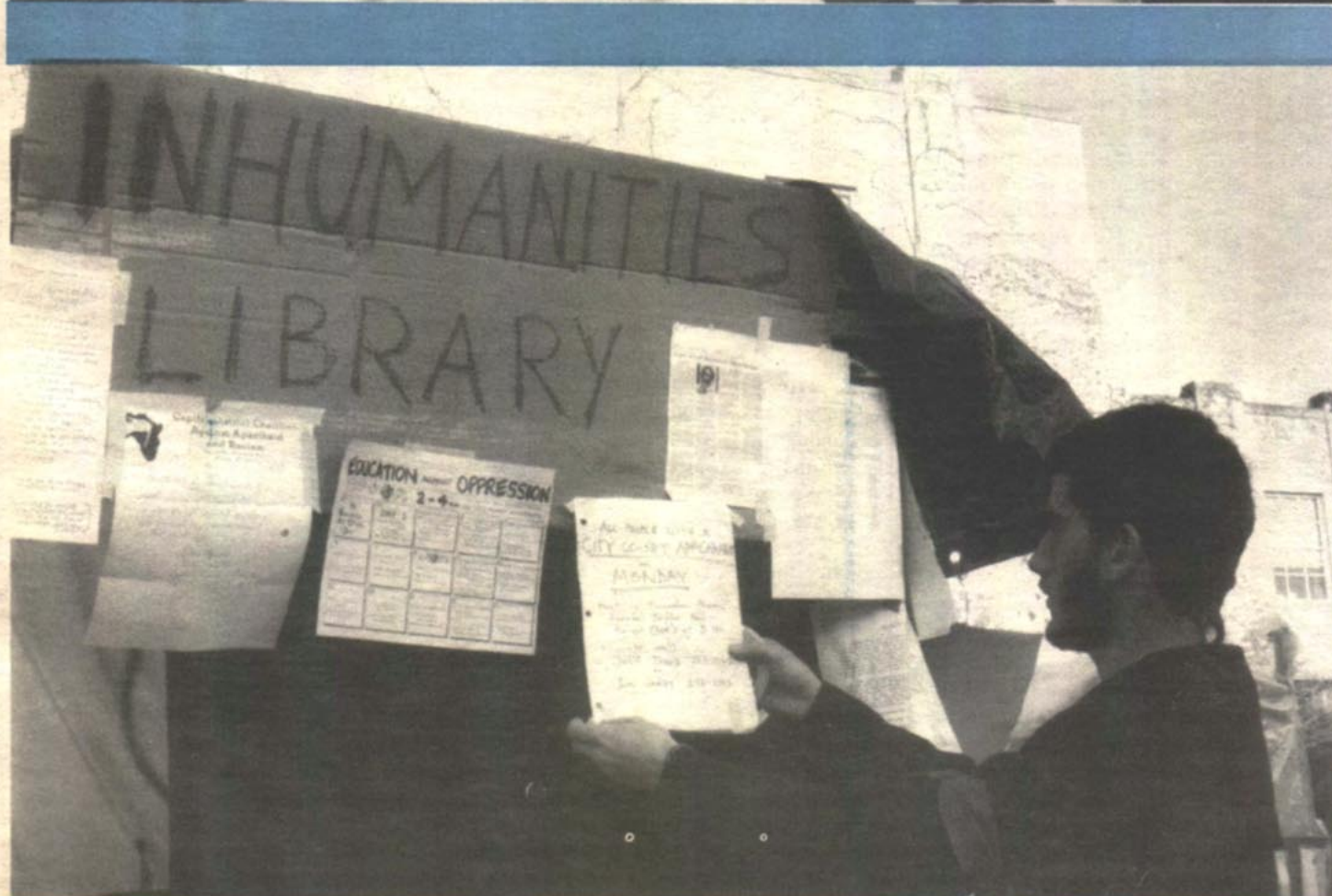
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Photographs: Connie Blitt



Scenes from the shantytown students recently constructed in the center of Cornell University's campus.

IN THESE TIMES MAY 15-21, 1985 9 are conditioned upon acquiescence.... It was not Hitler that murdered six million Jews, he merely gave the order. It was business as usual that murdered six million.... We take the necessary steps that this democracy grants its citizens to prevent any further crimes by its own government."

The rally lasted for three days and far exceeded the expectations of its organizers. "We thought it would last a couple of hours, since only about 70 people signed up," said Boulder student Kevin Harris. "But people in the crowd were so moved by what was happening—that they stepped up and decided they wanted to do their own part to stop the war in Central America. So it ended up lasting three days and we had 478 people arrested."

When the CIA gave up and quit recruiting, 150 people remained on the list of those willing to be arrested. The city eventually dropped the charges against the demonstrators, 90 percent of whom were students, including 40 high school and junior high students.

Although Colorado had the largest civil disobedience against the CIA on campus, the agency's recruiters have been met with resistance in many universities and colleges across the country. Last November 5, at the University of Massachusetts, Perry Amsellem and Lisa Sheehy were arrested while attempting to express their concerns to CIA recruiters.

"We let them know we were there because they were intervening in Central America," said Amsellem, a legal studies major. "We let them know specifically what laws they were violating under international law, what chapter and paragraph. They told us that this was all a matter of opinion."

The students had the opportunity to prove their point in court, as Judge Alvertus Morse heard testimony from expert witnesses including international law scholar Richard Falk from Princeton and Ralph McGehee, former director of Covert Actions for the CIA during the Vietnam War and author of the book *The Deadly Deceit*.

"The whole place was quiet. You could see all the police officers and the judge extremely interested in what McGehee said," said Amsellem. "He told the court that the CIA deliberately misinforms Congress and the public on matters of foreign policy so as to generate public consent on these policies."

The statement read by Judge Morse at the conclusion of the trial was a powerful and supportive reassessment of the students' cause. Although he reserved final judgment on the case because of technicalities, he said in part, "It is clear that defendants in this case held such deep convictions that they could not stand by silently and watch atrocious acts be funded and directed by the CIA and a misguided foreign policy in Central America. The defendants believe as I do in this case that all citizens must exercise and protect those cherished rights by which they can call their government to account for its actions."

Students now understand that they live and study on the frontline of nuclear war and they no longer have to be drafted to become the fodder of the battle. In Rhode Island, Brown University students stirred up a controversy recently when they attempted to have their university stockpile cyanide pills as a humane gesture to prevent any undue suffering in the event of a nuclear holocaust.

If testimony given last week by students at the invitation of the UN Committee Against Apartheid is any indication, this country has only begun to witness the budding of a student movement, the effects of which will likely be felt for a long time to come. Sue Ray represented the feelings of thousands of SUNY students throughout New York state when she said, "We will be at every board meeting from here to eternity until the SUNY board divests." ■

Freelance writers **Dennis Bernstein** and **Connie Blitt** are co-directors of the Media Workshop at Bronx Regional High School in New York City's South Bronx.

LETTERS

In These Times is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

Rarity

THANK YOU FOR THE EXCELLENT, ENLIGHTENING article on the present situation in Greece by Spyros Draenos, editor of the English-language Greek monthly *Thirty Days* (ITT, April 24).

It is rare, more likely it is avoided by most serious newspapers these days, to find good reporting on Greece that helps us understand the country and its people. Much of what is written about Greece, especially in the *New York Times*, is a continuous effort to brainwash the public with the mockingbird's song from our own administration and to paint the Greek administration as dupes.

I would like to read more articles by Draenos to keep us informed and on a continuing basis. We have little opportunity to know what is happening there, and from such a keen analyst and observer.

Clara R. Maslow
New York

Unfit

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT ATTORNEY GENERAL Edwin Meese does not care a great deal about law and ethics. This was recently seen in his flagrant attack on Congress and the courts.

Meese declared the Reagan administration will defy Congress and a court decision regarding competitive bidding for government contracts. In Congress, the General Accounting Office was provided to review government contracts in order to assure that bids were awarded properly. The Reagan administration has not cooperated with the GAO even though in late March a district court decision (*Ameron Inc. vs. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*) ruled in favor of the GAO's reviewing power. Meese holds that the administration will defy the trial decision.

Apparently Meese does not regard a trial court as having power to decide legal issues.

In our system of law, one abides by a decision until that decision is overruled. But Meese and the Reagan administration believe they are above the law.

Meese's wanton disregard for the law shows that he is not fit to be attorney general.

Paul S. Sonenberg
San Francisco

Snoozers

ICAN'T BELIEVE HOW MUCH SPACE YOU DEVOTED to this Jim Sleeper vs. the *Village Voice* business. I'm from New York City, and I was bored and confused by the litany of trivial connections between politicians and *Voice* writers; imagine how readers from California felt. So journalists aren't objective and they favor some politicians over others. With the State Department, the *New York Times* and the major networks trading employees, is that really news? So the *Village Voice* does a lot of nasty, childish mud-slinging. It's a Murdoch paper. Should we really be surprised? Aren't there more important things *In These Times* should be reporting on than the infighting of half a dozen writers? If not, maybe I should cancel my subscription, because the whole Sleeper business put me right to sleep.

Beth Jackendoff
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Housing

ONE CORRECTION TO SALIM MUWAKIL's excellent piece on the housing crisis (ITT, May 1). He has me saying that the Reagan administration "wants to increase rents [in subsidized housing] from 25 percent to 30 percent of family income." The Reaganites already did this back in 1981. It was one of the first of their Draconian attacks on the poor.

When the Office of Management & Budget proposed this, it noted that this move would permit savings to the government over the next five years amounting to nearly \$6 billion. Another way of looking at those "savings," of course, is \$6 billion out of the pockets of the poorest segment of our society, so the government can spend less on needed social programs.

For families on the margin—as most living in subsidized housing are—an extra \$20-40 a month for rent can mean the difference between a decent diet and hunger, between adequate and inadequate winter clothing. The truth is that very low income families can't afford 30 percent, 25 percent or, in many cases, 1 percent of their income for housing, if they are to have enough left over for other basics. The nation's growing housing crisis and its growing poverty crisis are intimately related.

Chester Hartman
Institute for Policy Studies
Washington

Unkindest cut

WE VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR piece on the Middle East Organizers Training Conference (ITT, April 3), but we regret what you chose to do with the accompanying photo.

The conference brought together Jewish and Arab Americans with others active in the peace movement to explore strategies for addressing U.S. policy in the Middle East. We arranged for Joan E. Biren to take photos that would capture the diverse participation at the conference and the unprecedented cooperation that was emerging among the different groups. But in the one you printed, which portrayed participants from New Jewish Agenda, the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee and the American Friends Service Committee, the person from New Jewish Agenda had been cut out.

Apparently this was done intentionally for the sake of the layout. But a good photo can be as important a means of political expression as the written word. And it often communicates an image much more effectively than words. Joan Biren put a tremendous amount of effort into ensuring that her photos told the story of the strength that we all drew from joining together for common work on this difficult topic. I urge *In These Times*' art department to take its political work as seriously.

Jackie Gelb
Non-intervention staff, Mobilization for Survival
New York

Editor's note: The art department apologizes for this "error." However, neither the photographer nor the writer identified the people in the photograph.

Forgiving

THE PEOPLE OF THE U.S. ARE SO LUCKY to have such a forgiving president, who can forgive the killing of 250,000 American GIs and the genocide of millions!

When will he find it in his heart to forgive the several thousand American air controllers whom he banished from their jobs for committing the horrible crime of exercising the hard-won American right to strike?

John Rossen
Chicago

NPR again

NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO'S ROBERT SIEGEL (ITT, Letters, April 17) answers my charge (ITT, Letters, March 27) that his news broadcasts are skewed to the right by assuring us that they "advance no party line, no partisan position."

The reply is disingenuous. The question is one of maximum and uncontested air time given to spokespeople of the Reagan right—and I could add several more, including Richard Pipes, Kevin Phillips and Otto Reich. Siegel's claim that opposing political "commentators" make "frequent" appearances is, so far as I can tell, false. Besides, the only recognizably left figure he names is Michael Harrington, without noting whether (as I suspect) Harrington was offset by a conservative.

I tested NPR news again on April 20. The only commentator on President Reagan's Saturday radio spot, this time a litany of lies about Nicaragua, was Democratic representative David McCurdy, the mildest and least effective critic one could find short of an outright Reagan supporter.

I renew my plea to *In These Times* readers to cease financial support for NPR until progressive and left views are treated with the exposure and respect consistently given to Reaganites.

R.B. Du Boff
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

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Social Action Director, Minneapolis-St. Paul Archdiocese—"As a Catholic, I believe in some basic principles about peace and justice—distributive justice. I wanted to learn an economic theory that supports my religious beliefs."

Peace Activist, Raleigh, N.C.—"Liked the sensitivity of teachers, their enthusiasm for teaching and sense of humor. I can use this material to discuss relevant issues that make sense to people."

SUMMER INSTITUTE 1985 sessions are August 4-10 and August 18-24. Cost, including room, board, tuition and recreational facilities is \$250-480, depending on income. Scholarships and daycare available. Deadline for application is July 15.

WRITE TO CENTER FOR POPULAR ECONOMICS ★ BOX 785 ★ AMHERST, MA 01004

PERSPECTIVES

Forgotten history of the war in Vietnam

By Noam Chomsky

THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY of the departure of U.S. forces from Vietnam has been commemorated with extensive studies in the media of "The War That Went Wrong, the Lessons It Taught" (*Time*). With the passage of time, it is held, we can take a more dispassionate stand, removed from the fierce partisanship and emotionalism of the war years. In fact, these retrospective studies are familiar fare, framed within the unquestioned doctrines of official ideology. From them we learn little about the Indochina wars, but a good deal about the Western system of indoctrination.

The most striking feature of these studies is what is missing: the American wars in Indochina. It is a classic example of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. Apart from a few scattered sentences, the rare allusions to the war are devoted to the suffering of the American invaders. The *Wall Street Journal* refers to "the \$180 million in chemical companies' compensation to Agent Orange victims"—U.S. soldiers, not the South Vietnamese victims, whose suffering is vastly greater.

As President Carter explained during one of his sermons on human rights, we owe the Vietnamese no debt, because "the destruction was mutual." This monstrous statement evoked no comment, and the same mentality is reflected in the current retrospectives.

There is an occasional glimpse of reality. *Time* opens its inquiry by recalling the trauma of the American soldiers, facing an enemy that "dissolved by day into the villages, into the other Vietnamese. They maddened the Americans with the mystery of who they were—the unseen man who shot from the tree line, or laid a wire across the trail with a Claymore mine at the other end, the mama-san who did the wash, the child concealing a grenade."

No doubt one could find similar complaints in the Nazi press about the Balkans, or in *Pravda* about Afghanistan. But the meaning of these facts is almost never perceived. *Time* goes so far as to claim that the "subversion" was "orchestrated" by Moscow, so that the U.S. had to send troops to "defend" South Vietnam.

It is useful to review what has been eliminated from history by the guardians of the faith. By 1948, American planners recognized that the French were combating the nationalist movement of Indochina, the Viet Minh, and later they were well aware that the "Viet Cong" were the Viet Minh reconstituted. The U.S. joined the French attack with vigor, and, when the French withdrew, at once proceeded to undermine the Geneva accords and to establish in South Vietnam a terrorist regime on the familiar Latin American model.

By the time Kennedy took over in 1961, about 70,000 South Vietnamese had been killed. The repression evoked resistance. In 1959 the use of violence in self-defense was authorized by the Communist leadership. The client regime faced collapse, and in 1961-62, U.S. forces began extensive bombing and defoliation in South Vietnam, part of a program designed to drive millions of people to concentration camps to be "protected" from the guerrillas, whom, the U.S. conceded, they were willingly supporting.

The U.S. recognized that the regimes it established had no domestic base, and repeatedly overturned and replaced them when they showed insufficient enthusiasm for the mounting U.S. attack against South Vietnam. The U.S. desperately blocked efforts at political settlement and neutralization of South Vietnam, as proposed by the South Vietnamese enemy. The reason was candidly explained by leading government specialist, Douglas Pike: our "minnow" could not compete politically with their "whale" (*Viet Cong*, 1966). Since it was impossible to nourish the minnow, it was necessary to destroy the whale.

In April 1965, the U.S. extended the attack to direct invasion. By then, more than 160,000 South Vietnamese had been killed, many of them "under the crushing weight of American armor, napalm, jet bombers and, finally, vomiting gases," in the words of the French military historian Bernard Fall. The U.S. also began the regular bombardment of North Vietnam in the hope that Hanoi would pressure the southern resistance to desist, leading to the introduction of North Vietnamese troops to the south, exactly as planners had anticipated; the attacks against North Vietnam and Laos had been escalated in February 1964 and North Vietnam was bombed in August 1964 after the fabricated Tonkin Gulf incident.

The first North Vietnamese troops (a unit of the 325th division which had been, and perhaps still was, manned by South Vietnamese) were detected in the south by American intelligence in mid-'65; as late as July, the Pentagon was uncertain about their presence in remote regions of South Vietnam or across the border, though 2,000 Korean mercenaries were introduced in the south in January and in April U.S. troop levels were raised to 82,000 supplemented by 7,250 Korean and Australian troops.

Meanwhile, the bombing of the south proceeded at three times the level of the more publicized bombing of the north. Throughout the war, the major attack was against the south. The U.S. attack spread to Laos and Cambodia, where perhaps close to a million died, while the Vietnamese death toll may have reached three million.

By 1967, Fall warned that "Vietnam as a cultural and historic entity...is threatened with extinction." After the murderous post-Tet pacification campaigns and other atrocities in Laos and Cambodia, it appeared that U.S. policy would "create a situation in which, indeed, North Vietnam will necessarily dominate Indochina, for no other viable society will remain," as I wrote in 1970. This consequence of U.S. savagery would later be exploited as a justification for it, a propaganda achievement that Goebbels would have admired.

In January 1973 the U.S. was compelled to sign the peace treaty it had rejected the preceding October, though it announced at once that every essential provision of the treaty would be disregarded. With "preemptive" attacks, the U.S. and its client conquered about 15 percent of the territory of the South Vietnamese enemy within a year, evoking a North Vietnamese response and the quick collapse of the Saigon government.

It is revealing that the American attack against South Vietnam launched by Kennedy and escalated by his successors has disappeared from official history. Rather,

history records only "a defense of freedom," a "failed crusade" that was "unwise." At a comparable level of integrity, Soviet party hacks extol the "defense of Afghanistan" against "bandits" organized by the CIA. They, at least, can plead fear of state violence, while their Western counterparts can offer no such excuse for their servility.

The extent of this servility is revealed throughout these retrospective accounts, not only by the omission of the war itself, but also by the interpretation provided. The *New York Times* writes sardonically of the "ignorance" of the American people, only 60 percent of whom are aware that the U.S. "sided with South Vietnam"—as Nazi Germany sided with France, as the USSR now sides with Afghanistan. The U.S. was defending South Vietnam against "internal aggression," so Adlai Stevenson explained at the UN in 1964: aggression by South Vietnamese against the U.S. and its clients in South Vietnam. This Orwellian concept went unchallenged, and the same perception remained dominant among the educated classes, who, throughout the war, were either "hawks" who believed that with sufficient violence the U.S. could prevail, or "doves" who doubted that the desired success of American arms could be achieved at a tolerable cost.

Popular response.

The general population, however, came to reject the Party line. Even now, after many years of brainwashing, more than 70 percent of the population regard the war as "fundamentally wrong and immoral," not just a "mistake," a position held by far fewer "opinion leaders" and virtually none of the articulate intelligentsia. There is even a technical name for this disaster: it is the "Vietnam syndrome," a dread disease that infected much of the population, with such symptoms as understanding of the facts of the real world, opposition to massacre and aggression and sympathy for the victims.

Great efforts have been devoted to overcoming this malady, but it persists, imposing constraints on the resort to violence in Central America and elsewhere. The version of history now presented in the media, which resembles official Party history in the totalitarian states, is a further contribution to overcoming the threat of popular understanding.

Some intellectuals did actively oppose the American wars, but what they expressed cannot be understood officially as a matter of principle because they were opposing aggression in South Vietnam, then all of Indochina, something that did not take place according to official history. The Party line, then, is that they were defending Hanoi, which they saw "as the repository of moral rectitude" (*New York Times*). No evidence is presented to support these charges, and the actual record is scrupulously ignored. That is not difficult in a society with an obedient intellectual class.

The media informs us that American

"defeat is an inescapable fact" (*Wall Street Journal*). That is false; this unquestioned judgment again reflects the success of indoctrination. We have extensive documentation of planning in Indochina. This material, also ignored in the retrospectives, reveals clearly that the central U.S. aims were achieved: the U.S. gained a partial victory, and a very significant one. The prime concern of planners was not with Vietnam itself, but with seeing that "the rot would spread"—the "rot" of successful social and economic development under a nationalist leadership not subordinated to American interests. It was feared that this might have a demonstration effect, leading to erosion of the U.S.-dominated system in Asia. That will not happen. The countries of Indochina will be lucky to survive, and surely will not "infect" surrounding regions with a model of development concerned with domestic needs rather than the transcendent needs of Big Brother.

To ensure this success, the U.S. and its allies extended their control over surrounding regions. The 1965 military coup in Indonesia, which led to the massacre of hundreds of thousands of people, mostly landless peasants, was hailed by American liberals as proof that we were right to defend South Vietnam by demolishing it, thus encouraging the Indonesian generals to return their country to the Free World. In 1972, the U.S. felt confident enough to back the overthrow of Philippine democracy behind the "shield" provided by its Indochina success, thus averting the threat of national capitalism. Much the same was true throughout the region, not to speak of Latin America and elsewhere.

Postwar U.S. policy has been designed to ensure that this victory is sustained by maximizing suffering and repression in Indochina. The extent of this sadism is noteworthy. The U.S. refused to send rice to Laos, where the agricultural system was destroyed by American bombing. It attempted to block a gift of 100 buffalo from India by cancelling "food for peace" aid, while the press featured pictures of peasants pulling plows, a sure proof of Communist iniquity. The U.S. attempted to block the gift of pencils and solar pumps for Cambodia. Here, the U.S. explains that it supports the Democratic Kampuchea coalition, based on Khmer Rouge forces, because of its "continuity" with the Pol Pot regime, while its ally Deng Xiaoping states frankly that "it is wise for China to force the Vietnamese to stay in Kampuchea, because that way they will suffer more and more."

The elementary truths about these terrible years survive in the memories of those who opposed the U.S. war against South Vietnam, then all of Indochina, but there is no doubt that the approved version will sooner or later be established by the custodians of history, perhaps to be exposed by crusading intellectuals a century hence, if "Western civilization" endures that long.

Noam Chomsky's most recent book is *Fateful Triangle*.

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PERSPECTIVES

The Reagan blend of truth and half-truth

	CARTER 1976-1980	REAGAN 1980-1984
Real GNP	+ 13.6%	+ 11.1%
Industrial Production	+ 12.6%	+ 11.1%
Fixed Business Investment	+ 32.0%	+ 23.4%
Residential Construction	- 8.0%	+ 27.8%
Disposable Income Per Capita	+ 7.9%	+ 10.1%
Civilian Jobs Created	10.6 million	5.7 million
Average Unemployment Rate	6.5%	8.6%
Average Weekly Earnings, Private Nonfarm (1977 dollars)	\$183.62	\$170.74
Average Import-Export Ratio	1.18	1.29
Average Personal Savings Rate	6.0%	6.0%
Federal Interest, Average Percentage of GNP	1.7%	2.7%
Inflation	+ 44.8%	+ 26.1%



Der Spiegel

By Richard B. Du Boff

EVER SINCE THE REAGAN recession bottomed out in November 1982, the public has been bombarded with White House claims of a Reaganomics victory. Most recently, President Reagan and his economic advisers asserted in the 1985 *Economic Report of the President* that (1) the rate of growth of gross national product in 1984 was "the most rapid in 30 years"; (2) "the present recovery is...the strongest since the Korean war"; and (3) "real business fixed investment in plant and equipment is higher, relative to real gross national product, than at any time in the postwar period."

These statements amount to a blend of truth, half-truth and selective reading of numbers torn out of historical context.

In constant 1972 dollars, GNP grew from \$1,534.7 billion in 1983 to \$1,639.9 billion in 1984, or by 6.9 percent. By itself this is an impressive rate, the best one-year advance since 1950 to 1951 (8.3 percent). What the Reaganites fail to point out is that it represented a snapback—and, given the persistently high unemployment rate, an insufficient one at that—from the longest stretch of economic stagnation in postwar history. From 1979 through 1982 the economy registered zero net growth, as real GNP averaged \$1.48 trillion in both years and never surpassed \$1.53 trillion during the entire four-year period.

Furthermore, year-to-year changes in national output and income are too short to evaluate an economic recovery, which

typically lasts for 33 to 45 months (if the record of the 30 business cycles between 1854 and 1983 is any guide). This is why Reagan's economists lay claim to the "strongest two-year recovery since the Korean war." Starting from the last three months of 1982 (1982IV), real GNP grew 6.3 percent over the next four quarters and 5.9 percent during 1983IV-1984IV.

Compared with the recoveries from the preceding seven postwar recessions, the current recovery indeed ranks ahead of all except the one that began in 1949IV (13.3 and 5.9 percent). But it is not substantially better than the recoveries that began in 1970IV (4.7 and 7.0) and 1975I (6.7 and 4.4) and hardly supports the "new era" hallelujahs of the Reagan right.

Moreover, all these recovery rates are suspect. Any measurement of economic growth from one three-month span to another can be affected by random forces or shocks whose influence is always sharper in short time frames. If we annualize growth rates to smooth out quarterly disturbances, a truer picture of the underlying business cycle paths emerges. It shows that the Reagan recovery finishes out of the money in the postwar sweepstakes. From 1982 through 1984, real GNP on average rose from \$1,480 billion to \$1,639.9 billion—by 10.8 percent. This is significantly lower than two-year recovery growth from 1975 through 1977 (11.2 percent), 1964 through 1966 (12.4 percent) and 1949 through 1951 (17.7 percent).

The same sleight of hand is apparent in the boast about the record-breaking percentage of GNP devoted to fixed business

investment in 1984. The figure, 12.5 percent, is a postwar high-water mark. But in fact the fixed business investment share of GNP has been climbing throughout the postwar period. From 1949 through 1964 the ratio stayed between 8.7 and 9.7 percent, but from 1965 through 1977 it averaged 10.4 percent. From 1978 through 1983 it moved still higher, to an 11.0 to 11.6 percent range, so that the recovery surge of 12.5 percent in 1984 is not extraordinary—considering the depth of the back-to-back recessions in 1980 and 1981-82. From '82 to '84 the fixed business investment percentage of GNP increased from 11.3 to 12.5: here, too, the Reagan recovery turns out to be less than spectacular. In 1966 the same percentage rose to a then-postwar high of 11.0 from 9.4 in 1964, a bigger jump relative to trend than the 1982-84 increase.

The best overall summary of Reaganomics is the accompanying table, which presents a dozen economic categories Reagan might have picked out himself four years ago as desperately in need of improvement. The results are stunning. The only wins for the Gipper are in residential housing, after-tax incomes per head and the inflation rate.

Per capita income is an average covering the entire population. Thus, Reagan's success is more than cancelled out by growing inequalities of income, as the \$12.88 decline in real earnings of nonagricultural workers indicates, and the rise in poverty from 13 percent of the population in 1980 to 15.2 percent in 1984 (against an 11.9 average during the Carter years).

As for inflation, the Reagan victory has come at enormous cost. The severe economic slump was mainly responsible for the slowdown in inflation, along with a bit of sheer luck—the world oil glut and the fall in petroleum product prices. Reagan's unique contribution to reduced inflation is his assault on middle and lower-income wages and benefits, backed up by the fiercest attack on organized labor in 60 years.

The anti-inflation crusade of the Federal Reserve, with tight money and credit policies and escalating interest rates, was a major cause of the economic stagnation of 1979-82. It was begun in late 1978 and wholeheartedly adopted by Reagan two years later. The dismal performance of the residential housing sector in the late '70s was a direct outgrowth, as is the misleading 27.8 percent increase under Reagan. In 1972 dollars, residential building peaked in 1978 at \$62.4 billion, then dropped continuously to a 15-year low of \$37.9 billion in 1982. The subsequent recovery brought it back to only \$60.2 billion in 1984.

In eight of the other nine categories Jimmy Carter wins hands down. Only in savings out of disposable income does Reagan manage a tie—not what we were promised by the 1981 Program for

Economic Recovery, which gave us tax cuts that were supposed to encourage savings and accelerate economic growth. As the data in the table demonstrates, they accomplished neither. Nor did they revive American business as an international competitor: for every dollar of exports, the U.S. imported \$1.29 worth of merchandise under Reagan, 9 percent more than under Carter. Of course, the tax cuts did help create huge budget deficits that increased federal interest payments relative to GNP to 2.7 percent, some 60 percent above the average level under Carter.

The results in the table are all the more remarkable because they are biased in Reagan's favor. Production and employment figures for 1980 are "low" because that was a recession year, so that 1980-84 growth rates are overstated. This means that the first six categories, from GNP growth through jobs created, make the Reagan record look better than it would if it were put on a comparable cyclical footing with Carter's. And even with this advantage the Great Communicator loses four out of the six.

The superior Carter record in employment deserves special emphasis in view of the Reagan propaganda triumph here. In Western Europe, even the "socialist" prime minister of Italy, Bettino Craxi, has lauded Reagan as an economic manager who knows how to create jobs, and various figures in the Mitterrand government have voiced similar enthusiasm for "le miracle de l'emploi" wrought by Reaganomics.

But the need to set the historical record straight should not carry over into high praise for Jimmy Carter. On the contrary, Carter greased the skids for Reaganomics with his sniping at the "federal bureaucracy" and his rush to "deregulation," as well as his nuclear arms build-up. At the same time, this analysis should confirm, for the left, the fragility of the present economic expansion. The sources of potential breakdown are at least as prolific as at any time since World War II.

This gives added reason to oppose the "neoliberals" in their rejection of virtually all forms of government intervention and initiative. It likewise raises questions about leftists who seem to be cowed by, or overcome with a curious admiration for, the new right and its Buckleyite godfathers as the "only coherent political force" operating today. The old liberalism is discredited, yet the right remains incapable of transforming the widespread disillusion and cynicism into a working "realignment." If the left walks away from all progressive programs involving a greatly expanded role for the nonmilitary public sector, it will gain little more from the next economic crisis than conservatives mouthing slogans about "growth" and "entrepreneurialism."

Richard B. Du Boff teaches economics at Bryn Mawr College.

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The Mind of Frederick Douglass
By Waldo E. Martin Jr.
University of North Carolina
Press, 333 pp., \$27.50

By Nell Irvin Painter

BORN A SLAVE IN Maryland in 1818, Frederick Douglass died in 1895, a relatively rich and famous figure. At the time of his death, he had been one of abolitionism's most effective authors and orators and was known as the greatest friend of his race. A newspaper editor from the mid-1840s to the early 1870s, Douglass generated an enormous number of editorials. He also wrote a series of autobiographies that were and remain popular, thanks to their extraordinary insight and stylistic grace.

The creator of abundant source material, Douglass is a historian's dream, heaven-sent to historians of Afro-Americans, in particular, for we ordinarily find ourselves making imaginative use of unusual or scarce sources.

This happy combination of fame and documentation make Douglass one of a miniscule number of Afro-Americans who have been the subject of more than one biography (Martin Delany, Booker T. Washington, Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois belong to this favored company). Douglass has also been fortunate in his biographers: Benjamin Quarles published the definitive scholarly work in 1948, and Nathan Huggins wrote for a general audience five years ago.

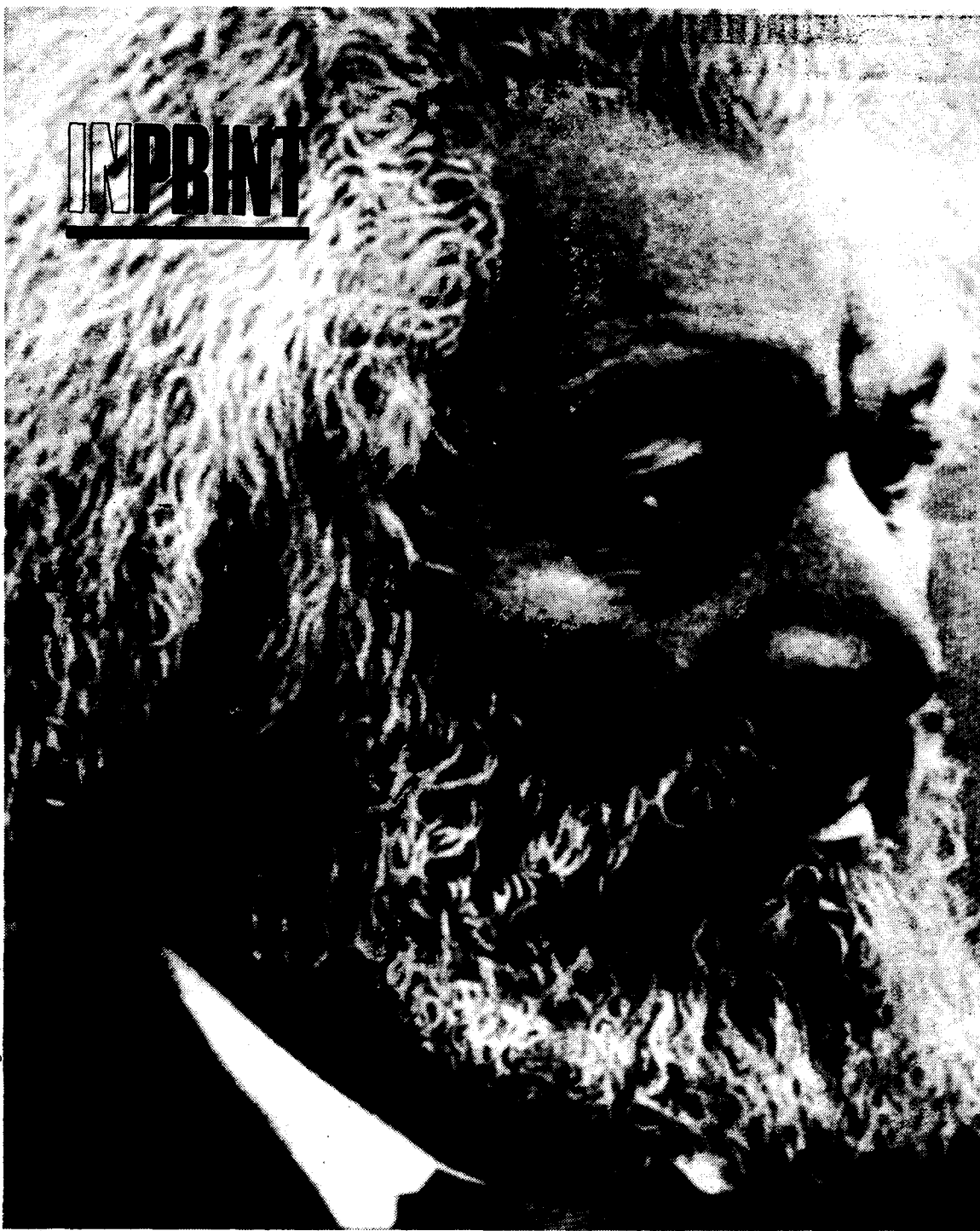
Last year two new paperback editions of Douglass' writings appeared, one edited by Houston A. Baker Jr., the other by Michael Meyer. In addition, John Blassingame is currently editing a multi-volume edition of the Douglass papers, a far more ambitious version of the work begun by Philip Foner in the '40s. Despite all this attention, Waldo Martin, who teaches at the University of Virginia, is the first historian to attempt a sustained analysis of Frederick Douglass' thought.

The Mind of Frederick Douglass testifies to Douglass' importance in the world of American thought and also to the continuing vibrancy of the revolution in American historiography wrought by the black studies movement. Martin is part of a growing coterie of black historians, which includes Wilson Moses and Vincent Franklin, who take black thought, not just black lives, seriously.

Waldo Martin's book, divided into four parts, examines Douglass' thought in relation to his history, to American nationality, to his autobiographical writing and lecturing and to several segments of social reform, including feminism (Douglass seconded Elizabeth Cady Stanton's resolution demanding women's suffrage at Seneca Falls in 1848). Hardly an original thinker, Douglass' views fit in comfortably with several other Americans from different camps, from Cotton Mather to Benjamin Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, as they sought in various ways to define American values and ideals.

Worth the wait.

Martin's study of Douglass arrives 90 years after Douglass' death, but it is well worth the wait. It is comprehensive, thoughtful, necessary reading for students of 19th-century reform in the U.S. Martin is perceptive in many areas, notably in his dissection of Douglass' uncritical approval of Europeans as innocent of the racism he deplored in Americans. The discussion of Douglass' re-



Born a slave in 1818, Frederick Douglass died in 1895 relatively rich and famous.

sponses to Egypt—an example of the Afro-American search for respectable antecedents—is downright touching.

Benjamin Quarles summed up Douglass' mind as "broad rather than deep," and Martin would agree. Douglass' breadth was that of the best of the Afro-American activists who shared the 19th century with him, such as Martin Delany (who should have appeared here more often), James McCune Smith, Ida Wells-Barnett, Alexander Crummell and Booker T. Washington. All of them stumbled in the contradictions that tied up Douglass' thoughts: first, being ardently American, embracing American economic, political and cultural values, they were stymied by the racism that seemed both inextricable from good American values and yet in violation of them. Second, being thoroughly bourgeois, they functioned as the spokespersons for a mass of peasants and workers. Martin speaks of these two confusions, the first with the care and length it deserves, the second not so critically.

Although Douglass was no friend of unions and probably had little or no sense of class (as opposed to race) solidarity, Martin only mentions the (Negro) National Labor Union and Douglass' perversion of it into a forum for the support of the Republican Party and takes Douglass' words of sympathy with workers too much at face value. In the matter of juggling both race and class, Quarles penetrates Douglass' mind better.

In the 19th century, prominent Afro-Americans nearly all were or became exemplars of conventional, bourgeois Euro-American culture. At the same time the black masses discomfited them profoundly. This unease is perfectly

BIOGRAPHY

Taking black thought seriously

understandable, for in this country, race prejudice has reinforced class prejudice. In the 19th century, stereotypes used against blacks as a whole were those used against poor, hard-working people of any race: improvident, barbaric, oversexed, drunken, lazy.

As a result, blacks intending to refute unfortunate racial stereotyping had to adopt cultural trappings with specific class connotations. In the eyes of the better sort, the people who shaped opinion and made money, no acceptable way of being both black and working class existed. Only by showing themselves as impeccably bourgeois could Douglass' black

peers disprove the tenets of racism. Martin hints at this class/race conundrum in a dependent clause in a sentence on temperance (refutes drunkenness), but he does not pursue this thought.

The bleak ordinary.

Martin does point out that in speeches and writings, Douglass distanced himself from any traits said to designate the mass of black people. Like many other middle-class black Americans, Douglass was not above embracing a few stereotypes of his own, so long as no one applied them to him. He spoke of his race as "a laborious, joyous, thoughtless, improvident people"



Frederick Douglass' breadth was that of the best of Afro-American activists who shared the 19th century with him.

IN THESE TIMES MAY 15-21, 1985 13
and deplored blacks' lack of gratitude as a racial characteristic.

Would he have agitated for the emancipation and enfranchisement of such people had he not himself suffered from racial discrimination, given his disdain of the "bleak ordinary" of black people? Douglass would have said yes, for he saw himself as a champion of social reforms that ranged well beyond issues of race. But the mature Douglass, the statesman and officeholder of the post-Civil War years, raises doubts.

Martin admits that this self-made man, biased toward the genteel, enjoyed hobnobbing with the rich and famous and became so much a part of the Republican Party that his critical eye dulled. But a sustained critique of the postwar Douglass does not appear in the autobiographical chapter, where it belongs. Martin does two things instead. He fritters away consideration of the mature Douglass and the black masses in dribbles in several chapters, and he makes a tentative stab at probing Douglass' later shortcomings in the epilogue.

Without systematically treating Douglass' drift into the Republican mainstream and away from concern for Southern blacks, Martin merely mentions instances in the 1870s, '80s and '90s when large numbers of blacks opposed Douglass. This opposition underlines the distress that poor blacks, especially poor Southern blacks, caused some prominent blacks in the 19th century.

I first realized Douglass' estrangement from Southern blacks when I was doing research on the Exodus to Kansas of 1879, a leaderless, millenarian movement from Mississippi and Louisiana that Douglass strenuously opposed. This ragtag migration of Southern black peasants embarrassed him: One of Douglass' opponents, himself a privileged black man, took Douglass to task: "Do not let colored men who are enjoying better opportunities, themselves fugitives, who have place and position, put themselves in the way of their struggling brethren who are being robbed and murdered." Douglass, formerly the scourge of slaveholders, now instructed the freedpeople to trust the good intentions of their former masters. Like his old friend, Martin Delany, Douglass did not like what he saw when actual Southern blacks confronted him.

As abolitionists, Douglass and Delany had fashioned a sort of noble savage black man, an untutored but natural bourgeois, a man who was civilized (in the Victorian way), whose only handicaps were race prejudice and slavery. Delany went South at the end of the Civil War, and the realities of Reconstruction in South Carolina practically turned him into a conservative Democrat. (He campaigned for a planter in 1876.)

Delany, a Northern, freeborn medical doctor, could not stomach the fact that the freedpeople were poor and dreadfully ignorant, that they embodied the shortcomings and vices that Delany, Douglass and the better sort in general have deplored in the poor (in this country and Great Britain) since the 17th century. Worse, Southern blacks were peasants, with disabilities and superstitions that everywhere accompany that estate, and culturally they were clearly the descendants of Africans. In this regard, Delany and Douglass show that much remains to be said not only about class and race, but also about region and race, in Afro-American history.

Nell Irvin Painter teaches history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



BROADCASTING

ART «» ENTERTAINMENT

Topsy take on ads for beer and wine

By Richard Mahler

THE BROADCASTERS OF America are scared. Relieved under the Reagan administration of most federal requirements that safeguard the public interest, they have suddenly been surrounded by a special interest group that threatens to attack them where it counts: the pocketbook.

The threat, by Project SMART (Stop Marketing Alcohol on Radio and Television) is real. It came about not through appeals to the Federal Communications Commission, but to elected officials.

Last February, Sen. Paula Hawkins (R-FL) conducted a hearing to examine the possibility of a link between broadcast beer and wine advertising and alcohol abuse. (Radio and television stations voluntarily keep hard liquor advertising off the air.) Congress had been sensitized to alcohol abuse issues in part through the emotion-laden presentations of Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD), and Project Smart has benefitted from that publicity. The House is expected to convene its own hearings in May and several bills that might lead to a ban or restriction on broadcast ads for beer and wine are expected this year.

Suddenly, the broadcasters have become good citizens on the airwaves. A survey taken by the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) last November claimed more than 90 percent of all broadcasters had aired some alcohol-related public service messages in the preceding six months, and that 81 percent had covered alcohol-related topics in their local newscasts.

One in five had aired editorials on the dangers of alcohol abuse.

The National Association of Broadcasters has attempted to prove its sincere concern over alcohol abuse in other ways as well. Its testimony before Sen. Hawkins so impressed her that she praised its members for demonstrating their "civic responsibility to the people of this country." The NAB even invited Candy Lightner, founder of MADD, to speak at its April convention. MADD has avoided taking a position on alcohol ads and has criticized Project SMART's lobbying tactics, arguing that "the government should be the public protector of last resort, only if the two industries most concerned—beverage companies and the media—fail to show responsibility in their advertising or sales promotions."

The broadcasters' recent spate of good citizenship may be less a demonstration of responsibility than of hypocrisy. Its major argument for alcohol ads is that existing advertising merely "influences brand choice" and never spurs anyone to buy beer or wine in the first place. (A 1 percent shift in beer brand preferences, brewers remind us, represents \$380 million in annual retail sales.)

In other words, low-budget public service announcements and editorials exhorting us not to abuse alcohol can and do influence actual behavior, whereas slick beverage ads conceived by Madison Avenue's brightest minds don't prompt any of us to drink, but merely to shift loyalties.

The broadcasters are more

forthright about their vested economic interest in seeing such advertising continue. A beer and wine ad ban would cut off nearly \$900 million in annual advertising income, representing 5 percent of television and 12 percent of radio ad revenues. These dollars mostly support sports programs, many of which the NAB argues might be cancelled without such sponsors. In this instance, the broadcasters may be right. Several fragile cable networks, for example, are heavily dependent on companies such as Anheuser-Busch for as much as 40 percent of ad revenue.

Broadcasters are convinced that the potential for such a ban is very real. They were stung 14 years ago by a ban on cigarette advertising that sent hundreds of millions of dollars to media competitors. Before the ban went into effect, anti-smoking forces used the Fairness Doctrine—a regulation out of favor with the FCC's present commission—to force stations to run thousands of public service announcements detailing cigarette hazards. It makes broadcasters very nervous when Project SMART argues that the same principle should be applied today to alcohol-related advertising.

The broadcasting industry, which reaps enormous profits from its use of the public's airwaves, clearly wants to have its advertising cake and eat it too. Perhaps more significantly, broadcasters have shown how nervous they are about their new-found emancipation from federal regulation. After 50 years of being told precisely what they could and could not do by the FCC they have stumbled upon a dangerous thing: their freedom.

During a 1985 NAB Convention session on the Emergency Broadcast System, recently freed from a thicket of regulatory underbrush, one station owner suggested to FCC member Mimi Dawson that some clarifying rules might be in order.

"You're asking the government for a regulation," she laughed in amazement. "That's the last thing we're going to give you! You people are on your own."

Richard Mahler writes on communications issues for *Broadcasting*, *Emmy* and other publications.

MEDIA B E A T

Our Guardians of Objectivity

"For some reason that I just do not understand," President Reagan's science adviser George Keyworth II asserted in March, "much of the press seems to be drawn from a relatively narrow fringe element on the far left of our society." And, he continued, "there's an arrogance that has to do with the power of the press." Maybe it comes from all that editorial freedom. At the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), James Quello isn't worried so much about political bias, but about the kind of muckraking that has led to what he calls "adversarial excesses." He called for editors to exercise stricter vigilance over rambunctious reporters, and suggested that they might even get advice from the business side: "Broadcast owners, executives and managers should more and more assume the role of publisher or even editor-in-chief."

All the News That's Fit to Blip

In the old days, White House correspondents attended press conferences and out-of-towners got press releases in the mail. But in recent months the White House has hooked itself up to ITT Dialcom's computer information services, offering same-day delivery. The administration has been rewarded with more, and more timely, coverage of its side of news stories; White House officials say the service has been used thousands of times over the past few months. *Washington Post* White House correspondent Lou Cannon suggests that the service makes easier a current trend toward use of "official news" by media that don't have their own reporters on the scene. "One of the reasons people get so upset at *Time* or CBS may be because there's a great gap between the kind of reporting we do and a White House press release," he told *In These Times*. Reports Committee for Freedom of the Press' Jack Landau believes the service could be a big step from public relations to official news, sidestepping "the analysis and accountability of the White House press corps." He's not alone: Sen. William Proxmire has issued a warning that he would support cuts for funds to the service if it grows, because it could lead to the nation's "first government-owned, operated and controlled news service."

Almost-Commercials on Almost-Public TV

As public broadcasting faces an austerity budget in Congress—which gives it only a fraction of what's necessary and reflects Reagan's distaste for the service—the search for dollars gets more intense. PBS has invested in a hardsell ad campaign to raise individual subscriptions, called "TV Worth Watching Is TV Worth Paying For." But viewers may soon be in the position of both paying for noncommercial TV and getting ads—or something that looks a lot like them. Guidelines for underwriting acknowledgements have been relaxed to the point that we can watch, on the new series "The Sporting Life," a pitch to buy Grape-Nuts cereal, carrying a coupon worth 25 cents of support from General Foods for public TV. Some at PBS, such as President Bruce Cristensen, worry that PBS may be selling itself cheap, and they encourage caution. Others think underwriting restrictions should be loosened even further. The audience public TV sells to advertisers is upscale, a fact hinted at in the recent agreement to put the marketing of public TV magazine *Dial* in the hands of an airline magazine company, which public TV executives boast has a "similar demographic audience." The rest of the audience contributes, through tax dollars and donations, but its money tends to fund operating costs while corporate and ad dollars tend to fund programming. Even when corporations get what they want, it may not be enough. Mobil, for instance, squawks whenever its shows are bumped from a prime-time spot.

The Tortured Tomato

A kibbutz-owned Israeli company importing tomatoes, in a *New York Times* advertisement, accused American farmers of brutalizing their tomatoes: "They wean them too early, pluck them from the vines still green and gas them to turn 'em pink. Then they cram them into semi-trailers and turn them out into the street." The ad enraged Florida tomato growers, who thought the Israeli company was playing foul with references to gassing and cramming. An indignant letter to the *Times* in turn accused the firm of dredging up "illusions [sic] of the Holocaust." The advertiser, however, denied there was any connotation implied; the description of American "WonderBread"-like tomatoes was merely accurate.

What Wide Wide World?

When the plight of Ethiopian refugees finally hit the evening news, some noted that the networks had studiously ignored the African crisis for years, before deciding to make it a crisis. Now a study entitled *Television's Window on the World*, by University of Washington professor James Larson, shows how network news reinforces a general ignorance of global affairs. His analysis of more than 7,000 international news reports on U.S. networks between 1972 and 1981 shows that 90 percent of the stories concerned only three nations: the U.S., the USSR and Israel. During that period all of Latin American nations received less than 2 percent of overseas coverage time. If he was getting his news from TV, it's no surprise that Reagan was shocked to discover after a state visit that "they're all individual countries down there."

—Pat Aufderheide

CATOP

Continued from page 16

a fundraising and an organizing tool for the future.

Also pleading with you to pick up your phone and call in about Central America this summer will be the American Security Council (ASC), with its half-hour direct-response documentary, "Crisis in the Americas." You might even recognize some of the same sad faces in this film, but they come with a different message: that the "international communist conspiracy" is creating havoc, not only in Central America but within our own country.

ASC has already produced one Central America issue documentary, called "Attack on the Americas." It had a simple, powerful point: "communism is inching up the Americas. Intercut with file footage of vio-

lence and poverty was a map showing an ominous, growing red blot oozing its way up north. Made in 1980, "Attack" had one major marketing problem. It aired just as Reagan won the election, and people just didn't feel they had to pick up the phone.

Now, with the administration's *contra* support challenged, there's new opportunity, as ASC officials see it. "Crisis" has a more sophisticated structure than "Attack," and it uses administration figures themselves to sound the alarm.

The hook of "Crisis" is drugs. "Crisis" purports to prove that Cubans and Nicaraguans are shipping drugs to the U.S., getting arms or money to buy them in return. They thus poison and corrupt our youth while undermining "a good example of democracy in action," El Salvador.

"Crisis" is just as emotional as "Attack" or "Faces of War." But it uses a heady mixture of pseudofacts (for instance, intelligence photographs that are freely interpreted); authorities such as Reagan himself,

Sen. Paula Hawkins and Jeane Kirkpatrick; and unidentified news file footage to get a viewer out of a chair and on the phone.

Fear vs. hope.

While ASC plays on fear, CATOP appeals to hope. But both share a common goal: to awaken a sense of personal involvement, touching someone's emotions in order to make them reach out.

Where the two shows differ in their strategies is in what happens after the phone call. ASC's "Crisis in the Americas" offers a solution by telephone—let your fingers do the lobbying. CATOP's "Faces of War" is part of a wider organizing campaign.

"You know the old slogan—media doesn't organize people, people organize people," says Nick Allen. So in each city, CATOP intends to coordinate with grassroots organizers, to arrange for viewing parties and special events. Phone banks will be set up to call back people who pledge and offer them a chance to get involved

IN THESE TIMES MAY 16-21, 1985 15 locally on the Central America issues. Some national groups, such as SANE, are involved in the community organizing, and Dr. Charlie Clements' Americans for Peace in the Americas will be making follow-up appearances in some cities. Allen even envisions ad-hoc working groups around Central America issues forming out of the TV campaign.

Allen, putting finishing touches on the show, which begins airing in late June, is impatient to see the first results of the experiment. "If we want to get our issues on the national agenda," he says, "we've got to learn how to use television." ASC's counterprogramming ought to provide a timely way to gauge the differing appeals of fear and hope on the medium that now sells political perspectives along with cookware and record sets.

For more information on CATOP, or to organize around a showing in your area, contact CATOP, 2940 16th St., #200-2, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 621-3711.

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of ITT Calendar.

WASHINGTON, D C

May 17

Dialectics of Disaster: Reason for Hope. A discussion with Ron Aronsen, author and noted scholar. Presented by DC/MD Democ-

ratio Socialists of America. 8:00 p.m. at Machinists Hall, 1300 Connecticut Ave., NW. \$3.00 donation (\$1.00 low income).

May 25-27

Join CISPES activists from all over the country for the opening events of the first CISPES national convention in Washington, D.C. Day-long conference on Central America and the U.S. anti-intervention movement. Featuring, among others: Anne Braeden, Sylvia Hill, Secundino Ramirez, Renny Golden, Rev. Phil Weaton, Bert Corona, FMLN-FDR reps., Damu Smith, Hon. Gus Newport, Susana Cepeda, Archie Singham, Michael Ratner,

and Luis Mendez. American University, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. To be followed by an evening of songs, dancing, and poetry. For information: (202) 887-5019 or write to: CISPES, P.O. Box 50139, Washington, DC 20004.

CHICAGO, IL

May 18

"Speak-Out for Choice." Listen to the personal stories of your mothers, daughters and sisters as they speak out about abortion through letters and in person. Noon-3:00 p.m. at 357 E. Chicago Ave. Guest speakers: Carol

Kleiman and Eugenia Chapman. Guest letter readers include Nicole Hollander. For more info call NARAL of Illinois, (312) 644-0972.

GREENFIELD, MA

May 19

Bread and Puppet Theater will perform "The Door" at Greenfield High School Auditorium. Proceeds go to MADRE, a Nicaraguan women's organization, to build a women and children's hospital in Managua, and a children's school and orphanage in the northern war zone. Tickets: The Door, 21 Abbott St., Greenfield, MA 01301, (413) 772-0711.

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COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS—the Dakota Resource Council is a grassroots organization of farmers and rural people active on energy development, family farm and toxics issues. Members are committed to economic justice and advocacy at the local, state and national levels. Organizers are responsible for membership recruitment, leadership development, fundraising, action research and campaign development, and must be committed to working with rural people toward social change. Starting salary is \$9,600 per year, benefits. Contact Theresa M. Keaveny, Dakota Resource Council, 29 7th Ave. W., Dickinson, ND 58601, phone (701) 227-1851.

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by
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AUFDERHEIDE

IT'S A FAMILIAR TECHNIQUE ON TV, used to sell everything from home tool kits to golden oldie rock hits—the 800 call-in-now number, flashed over an advertisement.

In the last few years, the technique, known as "direct response," has also sold opinions. Groups such as the National Wildlife Federation have attracted new members by connecting television to telephone. And issue groups have plugged their causes on broadcast time paid for by the pledges people make while watching their programs. Conservatives pioneered the approach; the American Security Council in particular, has boosted its membership rolls with programs like *The SALT Syndrome*. Following the right's media lead have been left-of-center productions like the Foundation for the Arts of Peace's "In Our Defense" and People for the American Way's "Life and Liberty."

This summer, direct-response television will be selling views of Central American policy, both from the left and the right.

"Faces of War" is a half-hour documentary assembled by Central America Television Organizing Project (CATOP), a group sponsored by the Institute for Food and Development Policy and Oxfam America. Aimed at a broad middle range of American TV viewers, the show is strong on emotion and light on names, dates and figures. It focuses first on Nicaragua, showing American volunteers participating in social reconstruction. It then moves to El Salvador, where mothers and children in a refugee camp describe political terror and misery.

In the countryside, an American teacher breaks off an alphabet drill to explain what she thinks the children need most to learn: "It's what you have with each other that makes a difference." And Bill Ford, brother of a nun murdered in El Salvador, delivers the film's bottom-line message. "People are basically good," he says, "but they need information. It took the death of my sister to get my attention, and I hope it doesn't take that for other people."

There isn't a wealth of information in "Faces of War," but producer Nick Allen isn't worried about that. His goal was not

-OR-
dial-a-
HOPE

This
SUMMER,
TELEVISION presents
viewers with
OPTIONS on
approaches to
Central America.

to explain policy issues, but simply to bring viewers to the point where they want to know what those issues are.

"Most people just don't want to know anything about Central America," he says. "The problem is not lack of available information—that's all around us, even on the evening news sometimes—but people don't see why they should care." The film attempts to awaken that sense of caring, to show that one person can actually make a difference.

It's easy to do so immediately, because six times during the show an 800 number crawls across the screen, and a spokesperson urges viewers to contribute funds to buy more time for the show. No one expects pledges to cover all the cost of airing the show, but everyone agrees that the pledges are worth more than the money people call in to promise. They also create a list of names and addresses of people concerned enough about Central American policy to make a phone call. That then becomes both

Continued on page 15